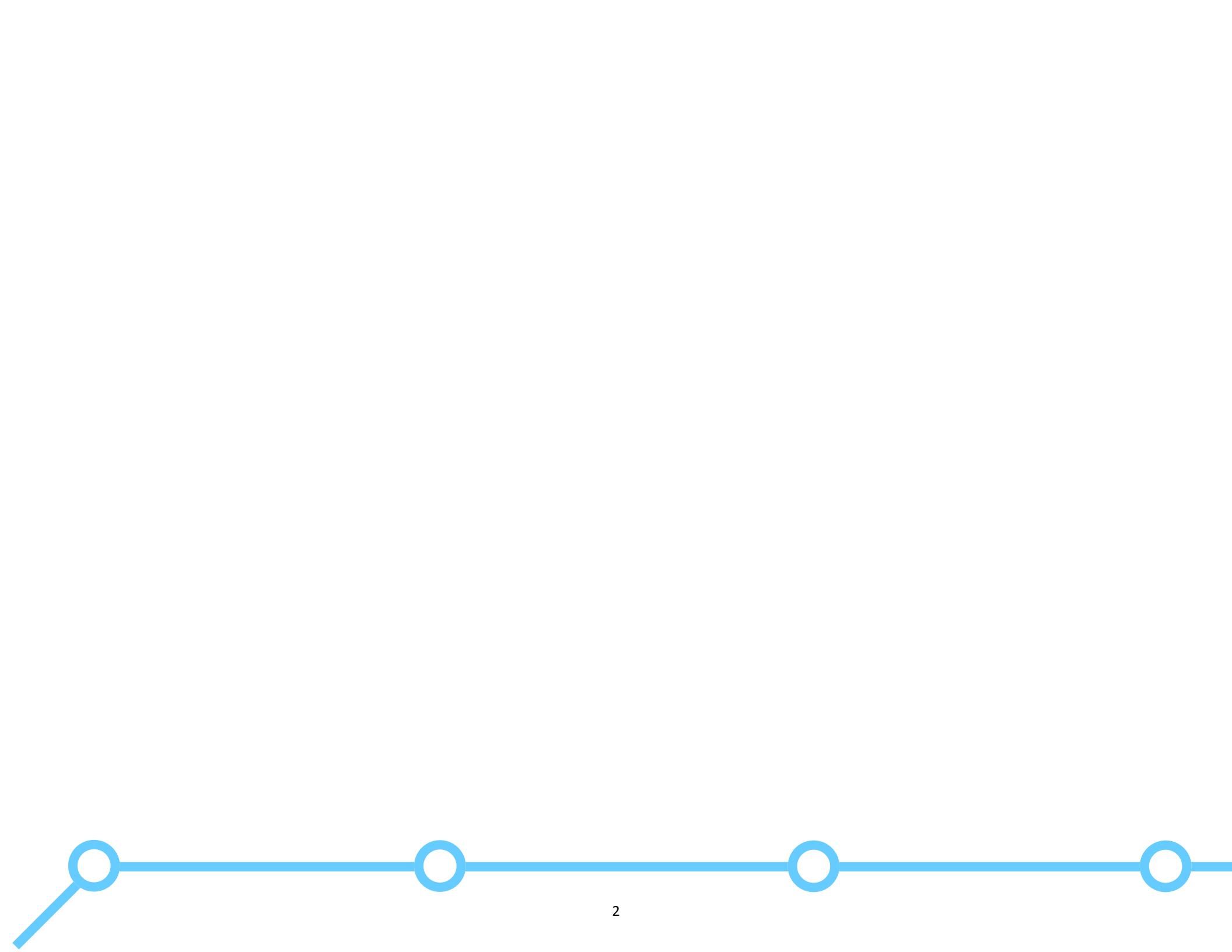


Greenlink Marketing Plan

2012-2017




A diagram showing a table of contents. A vertical blue line on the right has five circles at the top, between each item, and at the bottom. A horizontal blue line at the bottom has four circles, the first at the left edge and the others aligned with the vertical line's circles. The text 'Table of Contents' is written vertically along the right line. Five items are listed to the left of the vertical line, each with a page number in a blue circle to its right.

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1.1 Executive Summary

1.1.a Service Area¹

1.1.a.1 General Statistics

Located in the Central and South Central part of Greenville County, Greenlink/GTA provides fixed route and paratransit transportation services to the city of Greenville and Greenville County. Greenlink's current service area covers approximately 148 of the 790 square miles in Greenville County. The population of Greenville County in 2010 was 451,225. This represented a growth of 18.9% from 2000 (379,616) compared to 9.7% nationally. The population is projected to grow to 468,020 by 2015 and 492,890 by 2020 according to the South Carolina Budget and Control Board. According to the most recent numbers, the most heavily populated areas of Greenville County are Greenville City proper and the area surrounding Taylors/Greer. However, Mauldin and Simpsonville are anticipated to continue to significantly increase in population over the next ten to twenty years. Figure 1 demonstrates this projected population trend.

The three largest racial groups in Greenville County are white (73.8%), black (18.1%) and Hispanic/Latino persons (8.1%).² However, it should be noted that, among states, South Carolina had the largest increase by percentage of Hispanic/Latino persons over the past ten years with an increase of 147.9%. Persons of Hispanic/Latino orientation now represent 5.1% of the state's population. In Greenville County, the Hispanic population was up to 8.1% from 3.8% in 2000. 88% of the population of Greenville County speaks English only. As might be expected, the second highest language group is Spanish at 7.7% of the population. About half of these (3.6% of the total population) indicated that they speak English "less than very well." Of the entire population, 5.2% speaks English "less than very well."

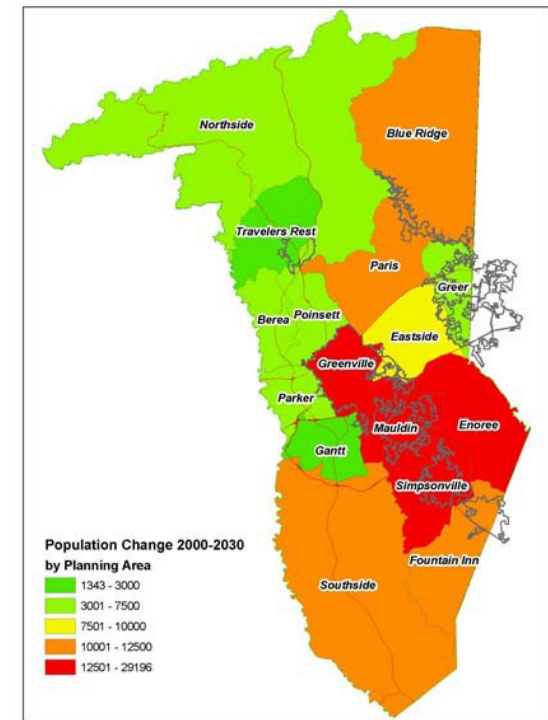


Figure 1: Population Growth by Planning Area, 2000 to 2030



1.1.a.2 Age

The median age in the County is 37.2 years. 12.8% of the population is 65 years or older with 21.5% under the age of 16. The age range is very evenly distributed in Greenville County. Between ages 0 and 59 years, no five year range represents less than 6.2% or more than 7.4% of the population. Only the 35 to 44 years age range shifted in percentage of overall population by more than 2% from 2000 to 2010 (decreasing by 2.3%).



1. Unless otherwise noted, all data collected from the 2010 United States Census.
2. "Persons of Hispanic origin, in particular, were those who indicated that their origin was Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or some other Hispanic origin. It should be noted that persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race." <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hispanic/hispdef.html>

1.1.a.3 Education/Educational Institutions

In 2010, among residents 25 years or older, 26.1% indicated “high school graduate” as their highest level of educational attainment. 20.5% indicated they had completed some college and another 8.5% indicated successful completion of an Associate’s degree. 19.6% indicated a Bachelor’s degree as their highest level of attainment. 10.5% have completed a graduate degree. Overall, 85.2% of the County population has received a high school diploma or higher and 30.1% have completed a Bachelor’s degree or higher.

Greenville County is also home to several significant institutions of higher education. Furman University, located on the northwest side of the City of Greenville near Travelers Rest, is home to over 2,700 undergraduate students from 46 states and 46 countries. Furman students currently have access to the Greenlink system through Route 3. A bit further north and just a few miles off of U.S. Highway 25, 2,260 undergraduate students study at North Greenville University. These students currently do not have access to the Greenlink fixed route system. Bob Jones University, located between SC 291 and US 29, currently serves 3,450 undergraduate students along with 500 postgraduates. Bob Jones University is currently served by Route 11. Greenville Technical College is a large public two-year college with multiple campuses in Greenville. More than 15,000 students are enrolled at Greenville Tech. This number does not include more than 25,000 students taking classes in the Continuing Education Department, which serves nearly 400 companies. Four campuses comprise the Greenville Tech system. The Barton Campus is the main campus near downtown Greenville located at 620 S. Pleasantburg Dr., Greenville, SC 29607. The Brashier Campus serves the “Golden Strip” and is located at 1830 West Georgia Rd., Simpsonville, SC 29680. The Greer Campus serves the Greer and Taylors communities at 2522 Locust Hill Rd., Taylors, SC, 29687. And the Northwest Campus, located at 8109 White Horse Rd., Greenville, SC 29617, serves the Travelers Rest, Berea and West Greenville communities. Several additional special centers are also located around the county for specific programs and services. Located in the old McAlister Square Mall at 225 S. Pleasantburg Dr. in Greenville, the University Cen-

ter of Greenville is a common facility for several South Carolina institutions to serve students in an alternative format. Along with Furman and Greenville Tech, Clemson University, the University of South Carolina, Lander University, South Carolina State, USC Upstate, and the Medical University of South Carolina offer courses for over 75 bachelor completion, Master’s and Doctorate degrees through the University Center. Finally, Southern Wesleyan University, Strayer University, Virginia College and Brown Mackie College all have a presence in the City of Greenville.



FURMAN



1.1.a.4 Employment

Greenville County is a growing regional economic presence. Historically, Greenville County has had a strong textile manufacturing industry and was widely known as “The Textile Capital of the World.” Recent decades, however, have brought a broader economic base including significant growth in engineering, particularly in the automotive industry, with the county having become home to the North American headquarters for Michelin and BMW as well as Clemson University’s recently established International Center for Automotive Research (commonly known as CU-ICAR). Greenville County employers draw workers from a wide area. Over 80% of the counties workforce includes people who reside within the county or adjacent counties. See Figure 2. The most significant employers in the county are the School District of Greenville County (8,700 employees), Greenville Hospital System (7,582), Michelin North America, Inc. (4,000), Bons Secours St. Francis Health System (3,500), General Electric Co. (3,238), Fluor Corporation (2,100), the US (1,857) and County (1,672) Governments, Bob Jones University (1,650), Sealed Air Corp – Cryovac Division (1,420), Verizon Wireless Call Center (1,200), and Greenville Technical College (1,140). Additionally, Windstream, Mitsubishi Polyester Film, Bi-Lo Corporation (Headquarters), Honeywell, Scan Source and Hubbell Lighting are all significant area employers.

In 2010 Greenville County had a 10% unemployment rate. 37.5% of the employed population works in management, business, science or art occupations. 24.1% of the employed population consists of sales and office occupations. 17.7% are employed in service occupations. Of the civilian employed population, 86.2% are private wage and salary workers, 9% are employed by a government agency, and 4.8% are self-employed.



FLUOR

Sealed Air
CRYOVAC
Food Packaging Systems

GREENVILLE HOSPITAL SYSTEM
UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

CUICAR
TOMORROW'S ENGINEER TODAY

BON SECOURS
ST. FRANCIS HEALTH SYSTEM

MICHELIN

GREENVILLE COUNTY
SCHOOLS
Where enlightening strikes

1.1.a.5 Income

Greenville County has a median household income of \$45,185 and a mean household income of \$63,146. 8.5% of households made less than \$10,000 in income and benefits. 6.1% made more than \$150,000. The income and benefits range with the greatest percentage is \$50,000 to \$74,999 at 17.8% of total households. 15.4% of the County’s population is reported to be below poverty level. 67.4% of occupied housing units are Owner-occupied and 32.6% are renter-occupied.

1.1.a.6 Areas of Significant Growth

A comparison of U.S. Census data of local municipalities surrounding the City of Greenville provide a helpful indication of where and among which racial/ethnic groups the population growth in Green-

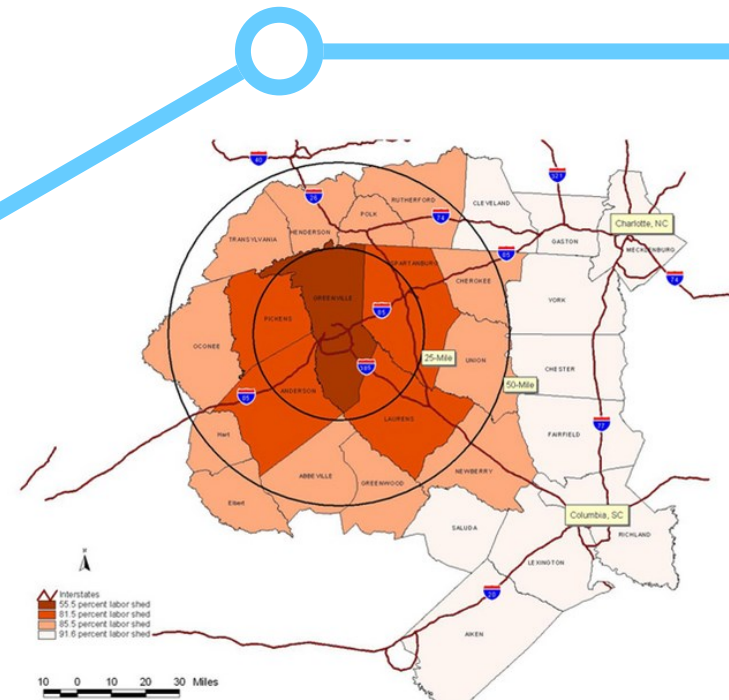


Figure 2: Disbursement of Greenville County Employees

ville County is primarily occurring. The City of Mauldin grew from 15,224 persons in 2000 to 22,889 in 2010. This represents a growth rate of 50% over the last 10 years. In that same period, the percentage of white residents dropped from 74% to 69% while the Hispanic percentage grew from 2.2% to 7.7% (416 to 1756). From 2000 to 2010, Simpsonville grew from a population of 14,352 to 18,238, a 27% growth rate. The population of white residents dropped in percentage from 82.7% to 75.7%. The Hispanic percentage grew from 4.6% to 8.9% (667 to 1619). Fountain Inn, experienced a 30% growth in population from 2000 to 2010, growing from 6017 to 7799 persons. It's demographic also shifted from 67.5% white and 2.4% Hispanic in 2000 to 63.7% white and 6% Hispanic in 2010. These figures demonstrate clearly that significant population growth is occurring along the general corridor of I-385. The City of Greer experienced the highest rate of growth over the last 10 years at 51%, rising from 16,843 in 2000 to 25,515 in 2010. In the same period, the white population decreased by approximately 2.5% while the Hispanic population rose from 8.2%

to 14.5%.

By comparison, the City of Greenville experienced 4.2% growth over the last 10 years (from 56,002 to 58,409). Traveler's Rest grew by 14%, Taylors by 7.4%, and Easley by 12.6%. In addition, the portion of Greenville County east of the City of Greenville is clearly growing at a much quicker rate than that portion west of the city. While population density remains high in the City of Greenville, population growth seems to be shifting from the County seat to the outlying communities of Greer, Mauldin, Simpsonville, and even Fountain Inn and Travelers Rest. This is seen in the maps in Figures 3

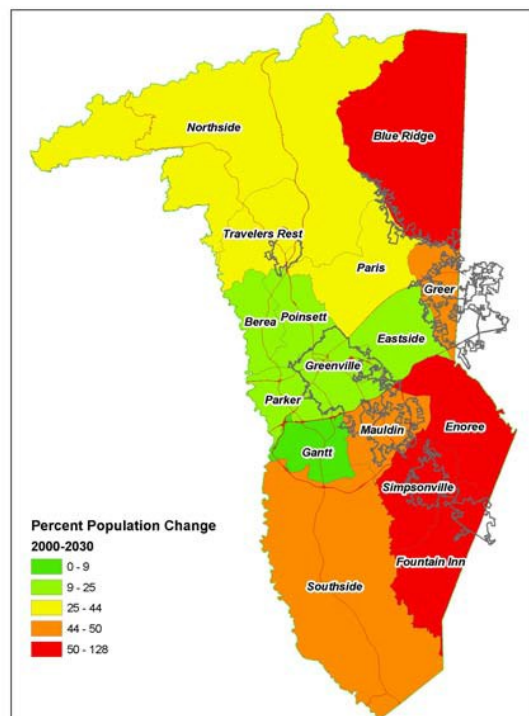
1.1.a.7 Transportation Issues

Significant to transportation issues, the mean travel time to work in Greenville County is 21.2 minutes. This is lower than the statewide average of 23.2 minutes and even slightly lower than the reported mean travel time in 2000, 21.6 minutes. "According to Arbitron, an online data website, the average commute time for the nation is 25.5 minutes."³ Perhaps even more significant for Greenville County is that the mean commute time when using public transportation is 34.7 minutes. Additionally, given the one hour headway, riders have less flexibility in departure times. This decreased flexibility likely results in many having to leave earlier than would be necessary otherwise in order to arrive at their destination on time. Having to leave significantly earlier in order to arrive at work at the same time is obviously an impediment to converting customers to public transportation from traveling alone.

The percentage of those driving themselves to work and those using public transportation has remained virtually the same from 2000 to 2010. A modest decrease of 3% among those who drive alone was mirrored by a 3% increase in carpooling. 85% of workers 16 years of age and older (230,448 persons) report driving alone to work. Those who report using public transportation (excluding taxicab) to commute to work make up only 0.3% of that population. The second largest form of transportation in commuting to work is carpooling at 9.5%. 2% report walking to work while 3% work at home.

The most significant age group utilizing public transportation to commute to work is 25-44 years which represent 79% of those who use public transportation. This is much higher than the 43% share represented by the 3. GTA Transportation Development Plan 2011-2016, p. 5.

Figure 3: Projected Percent Change in Population by Planning Area in Greenville County from 2000 to 2030 (From Greenville County Comprehensive Plan)



same age group among other forms of transportation. The other significant age group utilizing public transportation in their commute is made up of those ages 55-64. Interestingly, 0% of Hispanic/Latino persons age 16 or older report using public transportation in their daily commute. However, the percentage of persons who report driving alone to work drops from 86% among white persons to 81% among black or African American workers to 72% among Hispanic or Latino persons. Of those who indicate commuting by public transportation, 71.3% are female. According to the 2010 Census, no Spanish speaking residents reported using public transportation.

1.1.a.8 Major Travel Corridors⁴

North Corridor (US 276)

Description: This corridor consists primarily of the route along US 276/Poinsett Highway from downtown Greenville to Travelers Rest. The route features mixed use development including mostly lower residential densities highlighted by a designated Regional Center, Cherrydale Point, at the intersection of US 276 and SC 291. Cherrydale Point is the only place of concentrated employment along the corridor. A Sub-Regional Center is also designated near Furman University according to the future use plans of Greenville County. This area, along with central Travelers Rest, maintains a moderate population density of 800-1,700 persons per square mile. Closer to downtown Greenville, this range extends upward to 3,000 persons per square mile. Residential growth is anticipated in the Travelers Rest and Paris Mountain areas. However, except for Cherrydale Point and portions of Travelers Rest and the area surrounding Furman, employment growth is projected to be low.

Opportunities: The corridor is observed to be centrally located and well connected to significant residential populations. Several destinations are said to be “well positioned to attract transit-supportive development.” It is also well laid out with “relatively good block structure” and “positive building orientations.” The overall structure is conducive to pedestrian use. Two major opportunities for transit-oriented development include significant connections between US 276 and the Swamp Rabbit Trail (allowing for multi-

4. Information taken from *Greenlink Transit Vision and Master Plan*, pp. 12-22. See Figure 5.

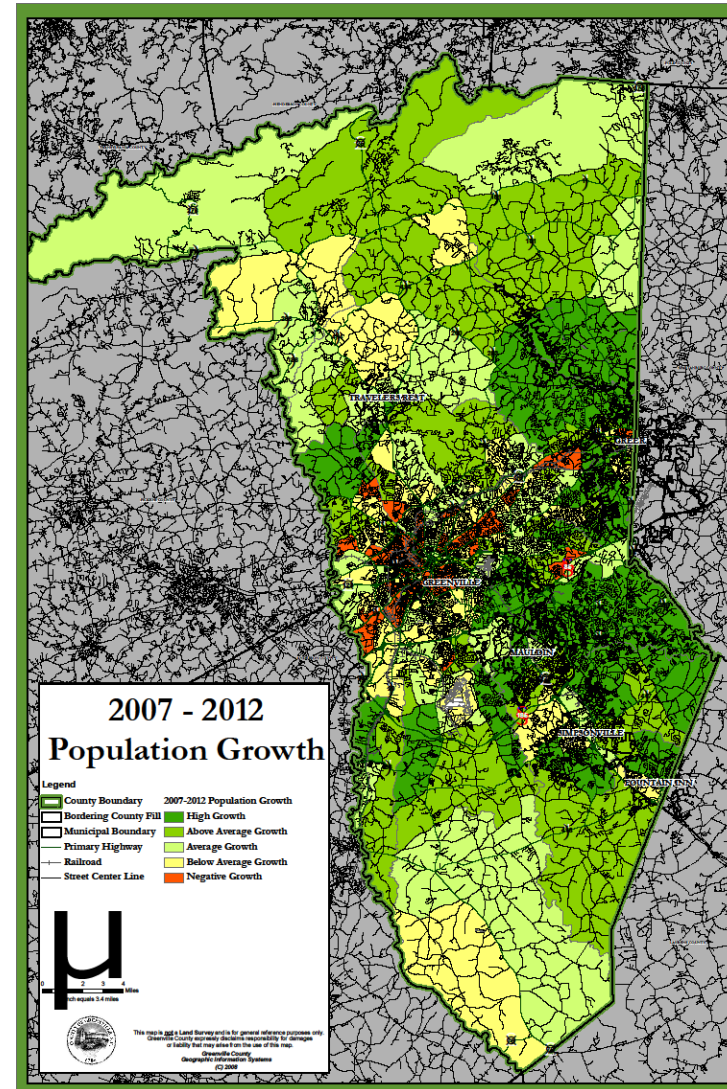


Figure 4: Population Growth in Greenville County from 2007 to 2030.

modal transportation possibilities) and the potential for a park-and-ride destination located in Travelers Rest based on its position as the corridor’s terminus and potential for future population growth.

Challenges: Challenges to transportation development along the North Corridor include projections of low employment growth,

shallow commercial parcel depths and primarily low population densities.

Northeast Corridor (Wade Hampton Boulevard)

Description: This corridor consists primarily of the route from downtown Greenville to Greer along US 29 and Wade Hampton Boulevard. The land use alters from downtown Greenville to downtown Greer. Between Bob Jones University and downtown Greenville land use alternates between urban and suburban use, becoming progressively more suburban moving away from the downtown area. There is some dispersed residential property along with vacant lots moving closer to Greer. Significant office, medical and residential developments predominate approaching downtown Greer along the corridor. Several restaurants, shops and offices surround a new park and municipal complex in the downtown Greer area after a recent renovation. Population densities range primarily from 800 to 3,000 persons per square mile except for Bob Jones University which boasts a density of over 6,500 persons per square mile due to on campus housing of students. While Greer is expected to continue to grow, outside of the quickly growing Taylors area, population growth along the corridor is projected to be stagnant at best. Employment is said to be concentrated around five primary locations – the downtown Greenville terminal, Greer Station, Greer Memorial Hospital, Bob Jones University and the crossing point of the NS Railroad and Wade Hampton Boulevard. The two central business districts for Greenville and Greer (downtown Greenville and Greer Station) employ a wide range of occupations from small business owners to business professionals to administrative staff to service-related occupations. Greer Memorial Hospital employs primarily medical staff (physicians and nurses), service staff and some administrative personnel. Bob Jones University employs mostly professors, administrative staff and service positions. Bob Jones also employs a significant number of students for on-campus jobs.

Opportunities: Numerous significant transit destinations exist near the corridor. However, several of these are not located immediately adjacent to the corridor and would require creative planning to

allow convenient access via public transit. The city of Greer and surrounding areas are projected to continue to experience significant population growth, particularly the areas Northwest and Southwest of the city. Reorientation and redevelopment opportunities exist for transit-oriented development, including the potential to modify lane widths and designate a right of way along Wade Hampton Boulevard. A park-and-ride located in or near downtown Greer would be advantageous to transit development.

Challenges: Currently, a primarily auto-oriented development structure exists the entire length of the corridor. Also, as in the North Corridor, shallow commercial parcel depths and low residential densities could prove to be significant impediments to transit development. Finally, the corridor lacks substantial greenway access. Moving forward, Greenlink intends to expand the reach and utility of the current transit system through improving multi-modal transportation connections. This lack of greenway access presents a specific challenge to the development of multi-modal connections with the existing transit system inhibiting the accessibility and utility of the system.

Southeast Corridor

Description: As the longest corridor, the Southeast Corridor connects Mauldin, Simpsonville and Fountain Inn along East Washington Street, Laurens Road (US 276), North Main Street, South Main Street (SR 417), and SR 14. Land use, population and employment densities vary widely along the corridor as it flows out of Greenville from the downtown area through three more municipalities, terminating in Fountain Inn. Most of the comprehensive plans developed by the municipalities are at least somewhat adaptable to transit-oriented development. The City of Mauldin, for example, plans transit-supportive residential densities flanking the western edge of the city center along Butler Road which intersects with the corridor. Fountain Inn plans for continued growth of higher density neighborhoods along the north edge of town, but does prohibit transit-supportive densities closer to town center. A Sub-Regional Center has been designated in Greenville County's comprehensive plan on SC 417 between Mauldin and Simpsonville, encouraging a mixed-use development of both restaurant and retail use in combination with high density suburban or urban residential areas. Significantly, this

corridor is intersected by two main thoroughfares, Haywood Road and Woodruff Road. However, both of these arterials currently exhibit a highly auto-centric design. Both residential and employment growth are expected to continue along the Southeast Corridor. Employment concentration is high and growth is projected to outpace all other corridors over the next couple of decades. Residential density is highest near downtown Greenville and declines moving southeast along the corridor. Simpsonville and Fountain Inn have lower residential densities. The residential population in Mauldin is concentrated on the east side of the corridor.

Opportunities: Significant employment and residential growth is projected along the entire length of the corridor. The Verdae, Millenium and CU-ICAR developments demonstrate existing development momentum and potential for transit oriented development along the corridor. In addition, the Greenville County Economic Development Corporation (GCEDC) rail corridor in the area is consistent with transit development standards and creates real multi-modal transportation potential. Significant vacant or underused lots exist along the corridor that could be developed into transit-supporting structures. Significant greenway connections exist along the corridor offering access to major employment and activity nodes.

Challenges: Pedestrian travel is challenged at points along the corridor by high traffic speeds and wide roadways. Portions of the corridor, particularly Laurens Road, are highly oriented to automobile use making transit-oriented development more difficult. Automobile dealerships also populate the northern portion of the corridor which could inhibit redevelopment. As with other corridors, shallow commercial parcel depths could hinder development of transit systems. Additionally, state ownership of the central infrastructure (State Hwy 276) presents an accessibility challenge. For most of its length along this corridor the highway is four lane with high automobile traffic. This high traffic density and wide road structure make pedestrian accessibility very difficult and even potentially dangerous. Given the state ownership of the highway, the easements and roadway enhancements which would improve accessibility will prove difficult if not impossible to develop. Without such structural enhancements it will be difficult to create a safe, comfortable and easily accessible environment around shelters and stops which encourages transit use.

Southwest Corridor

Description: The Southwest Corridor is the shortest of the five corridors, extending from downtown Greenville to Greenville Memorial Hospital at I-185 along US 29. The corridor is situated near attractive pedestrian environments and urban greenway space and the surrounding neighborhoods offer block structures conducive to transit options. Located at or near the termini of the corridor, the Greenville County Government Center and Greenville Memorial Hospital and associated medical offices/complexes serve as major employment centers. Population density decreases significantly approaching the medical facilities (less than 800 persons per square mile) but is high near the downtown area (3,000 to 6,500 persons per square mile). Greenville's Downtown Master Plan currently shows plans for five redevelopment projects, all of which are located within or near the corridor and would appear to benefit transit service.

Opportunities: The corridor offers substantial connections to residential populations, employment centers and greenways. It also features good block structure and positive building orientations.

Challenges: Again, shallow commercial parcel depths could hinder development of transit services. Residential land use is primarily single family units which is less conducive to transit-oriented development. Employment growth along the corridor is not anticipated to be high.

West Corridor

Description: Following US 123 and SC 93, the West Corridor connects downtown Greenville to downtown Easley. Land use varies significantly along the corridor. In and near downtown Greenville, mixed land use includes various housing types and regional destinations such as Flour Field (Greenville's minor league baseball stadium) and St. Francis Hospital, which serves as an employment center along Greenville's western edge. Moving west along the corridor, development becomes sparse between Greenville and Easley. Within the city limits of Easley, the development along US 123 intensifies including

significant retail use before diverging to follow SC 93 into downtown Easley. Well-formed blocks of established neighborhoods surround Main Street in Easley though connectivity is somewhat limited by the NS railroad that runs through the area. A transit-supportive residential density is called for in the Greenville County comprehensive plan between the city limits and US 25. However, other areas along the corridor, including within the city limits of Easley, are zoned for population densities that are less conducive to transit development. Consequently, current population densities range from up to 6,500 persons per square mile near downtown Greenville to between 800 and 3,000 persons in Easley to less than 800 persons between the two municipalities. Population along the corridor is expected to remain stable or decline. Economic and employment forecasts for both Easley and the “West End” of Greenville’s downtown area are positive.

Opportunities: Several large employment centers exist along the corridor which could benefit from transit services. The corridor also features positive connections to greenways and residential areas with relatively good block structures and building orientations. Pedestrian traffic is well facilitated around the corridor. Vacant and underused lots are available along the corridor which could be developed to better support transit services. As the terminus of the West Corridor, Easley has significant potential as a park-and-ride destination for commuters between Easley and Greenville in the future.

Challenges: Again, shallow commercial parcel depths and single family residential developments along the corridor are not supportive of transit services. Growth between the cities of Greenville and Easley is projected to be minimal.

1.1.b Service Overview

Greenlink currently operates ten fixed bus routes with sixty minute headways with service beginning weekdays as early as 5:30 AM and ending no later than 7:30 PM and running from 8:30 AM until 6:30 PM on Saturday. The fixed route system is a hub and spoke arrangement with a downtown transfer center serving as the nexus of the sys-

tem. The regular adult fare is \$1.50/ride. Children under 6 ride free. Twenty ride passes are available for \$27.00. Transfers are \$0.50. Day passes are also available for \$5.00.

In addition to the fixed route system, Greenlink also offers several other services. A CU-ICAR/St. Francis Shuttle is offered connecting CU-ICAR and St. Francis in a seven mile radius with a thirty minute headway. This shuttle service connects with Route 8 of the fixed route system at the Verdae stop. Greenlink’s GAP (Greenville Area Paratransit), a complimentary demand response service, operates weekdays from 5:30 AM until 8:30 PM and 8:30 AM until 6:30 PM on Saturday. The GAP service allows scheduled pickups within three-quarters of a mile radius surrounding the fixed routes. Trip scheduling is available from 8 AM to 5 PM.

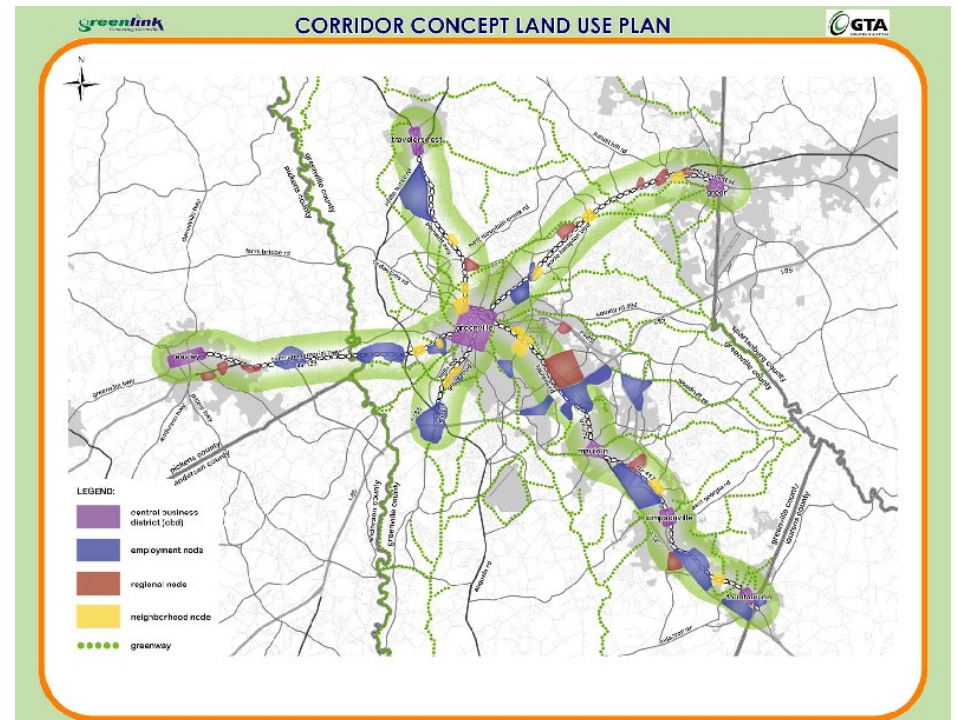


Figure 5: Major Travel Corridors. Taken from *Greenlink Transit Vision and Master Plan*, p. 22.

1.1.c Current Ridership⁶

Greenlink rates favorably among those who currently utilize the service. Of those who responded to a recent on-board survey, most are highly satisfied with service. 47% rated their overall experience as excellent with only 8% of respondents giving a below average rating. According to the survey, current riders primarily utilize the system to commute to work. The most prominent secondary uses include accessing medical appointments, school/job training and shopping. Nearly all current riders access the bus stops and shelters by walking and only a little over half (55%) state that they are conveniently located. Most current riders (71%) utilize the service 5-7 days per week. Many would like to see service expansion. However, it should be noted again that these results come from existing Greenlink customers. Finally, while not measured by the survey, it should also be noted that, per staff experience, the current customer base for Greenlink is almost entirely transit-dependent.

1.1.d Awareness and Image

In addition to the Greenlink on-board survey, a scientific phone survey was conducted by the Shapiro Group of registered voters in Greenville County regarding public transportation.⁷ The results demonstrated a general and widespread lack of awareness of Greenlink and the services it provides. Only 5% of respondents indicated they used public transportation at least once per week while 85% stated that they never use public transportation. 36% said they were “Not familiar at all” or had “Never heard” of Greenlink. While 64% reported some familiarity with Greenlink, only 14% gave with the highest possible response, “Very familiar.” Urban and non-white voters

6. Data gathered from Greenlink On-Board Customer Survey taken on December 16, 2009 as reported in the *Greenlink Transit Vision and Master Plan*. Of an estimated 2,235 riders that day, approximately 500 surveys were distributed and 215 responses were received.

7. Data gathered from scientific phone survey conducted from April 12-19, 2010 by The Shapiro Group as reported in the *Greenlink Transit Vision and Master Plan*. 444 registered voters were surveyed.

were the most familiar with the system (with 62% and 60% respectively selecting the “Somewhat familiar” response or higher). Still, 72% indicated they would support a plan to expand public transit in Greenville County. 53% indicated they would “strongly support” such a plan. Voters in the southern part of county (63%), younger voters (60%) and nonwhite voters (66%) are more likely to support such a plan.

Based on a survey of 467 persons conducted in 2009 by the Greenville County Planning Department,⁸ less than 1% of those surveyed rated “Transit options, such as train and bus transportation” as “Excellent”. 9% rated “Transit options” as “Good” and nearly 21% rated it as “Fair”. The majority, 58%, gave a “Poor” rating. Roughly the same percentages were given for “Bicycle Network”. In addition, 17% responded with “Transportation” as their first choice in selecting the three most important subject areas that need to be addressed with the plan connected with the survey. This made transportation the second highest selection for first choice behind “Growth and Development”.

1.1.e Current Marketing Efforts

1. **Identity.** Through its branding efforts a definite and consistent image has been created for the Greenlink system. Colors, fonts, and themes are consistent across all user access points. All buses and shuttles feature updated and consistent striping. All shelters feature the same attractive design which coordinates well with the Greenlink logo and bus striping adding to the consistent feel across the system. In addition, the website and bus stop signs use the same color scheme, logo and design elements. See Figure 6.
2. **Service Design.** Given current budget constraints, current service design attempts to maximize use of resources and minimizes rider inconvenience, including access to bus stops, wait and travel times. A recent change from a flag stop system to fixed bus stops has helped to increase on time performance leading to increased confidence in the system by riders. However, the current hour long

8. Data gathered from “Comprehensive Plan Surveys: Combined Results”, prepared in July 2009 by the Greenville County Planning Department for the “Imagine Greenville County” Study.

headways which result from budget constraints are unacceptable to most choice riders. Both the headways and lengthy travel times associated with the current service design present significant challenges in expanding ridership. In addition, current access to bus stops limits the number and type of riders using the system. The Transit Vision and Master Plan raises questions about the effectiveness of the current system design suggesting it is too circuitous and inefficient and in need of restructuring. The effectiveness of the hub and spoke system is challenged. An alternative route layout is suggested including multiple transfer points away from the downtown Transfer Center, elimination of circuitous routes and routes that do not originate or terminate at the Transfer Center.

3. **Passenger Information.** Passenger information is well designed featuring attractive and useable layouts. However, accessibility of this information is limited. Personal copies of route maps and schedules can be acquired at the Transfer Center. They are also available on Greenlink's website. However, access to this site requires internet access which some current and potential riders may not have.
4. **Promotional Efforts.** Currently, promotional efforts are basically limited to the branding of buses and stops.

1.2 Current Challenges

Staff analysis indicates that several challenges currently exist to better serving current customers and expanding to reach new customer bases. The most obvious is the lack of a dedicated funding source. This lack of funding is at the root of scheduling and potentially accessibility/convenience and awareness issues. From a scheduling perspective, the hour headway currently in place on the Greenlink fixed route bus system represents a significant hurdle to broadening our customer base to include choice riders. Choice riders is not a qualitative term, but represents those riders who are not transit-dependent (do not possess a vehicle, are disabled or elderly and cannot drive, etc.) but have a choice as to which mode of transit they will utilize for their transportation needs. Regardless of marketing efforts, such choice riders will be difficult to gain without a repositioning of

our product/service, including reducing the headway to a maximum of 30 minutes. Longer headways make scheduling departure and arrival times less flexible and convenient potentially forcing riders to leave earlier than desired in order to arrive on time. In addition, most people are simply not willing to wait an hour for a bus should they miss it if given the option. In the Shapiro Group survey, "How often the buses arrive" was cited by 60% of responders as a major consideration in whether they decide to use public transportation or not. As noted below, the only two responses cited as major considerations on more responses were "Convenience to your



greenlink
Connecting Greenville



Figure 6: Current Greenlink branding scheme

Figure 7: Major Factors Influencing Decision to Use Public Transportation (percentage of those indicating factor as a major consideration in whether or not to use public transportation according to the Shapiro Survey)

68% “Convenience to your home”
67% “Convenience to your job”
60% “How often the buses arrive”

home” and “Convenience to your job”. The lack of funding, however, presently makes reducing the headway on the system impossible.

Another inhibitor to expanding ridership to include choice riders can be seen above in the mean commute times. According to the 2010 US Census, those who drive themselves to work have an average commute time of 21.3 minutes while those who use public transportation have an average commute of 34.7 minutes. Again, few riders will decide to use a system which nearly doubles the time it takes to get to work. Additionally, convenience and accessibility of bus stops are likely to be current challenges in expanding the customer base. As noted above in 1.1.c, Current Ridership, even among existing customers (most of whom are transit-dependent) nearly all access the bus stops and shelters by walking and only a little over half (55%) state that they are conveniently located. Without park-and-ride lots, ridership is currently most likely limited to those who live within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the bus route. This number undoubtedly goes down considerably when referencing choice riders. Most people will simply not walk that far in order to access public transportation. This is supported by the Shapiro Group survey which reported that 68% of those surveyed cited “Convenience to your home” as a major consideration in the decision of whether or not to ride public transit. This was first among major considerations followed very closely at 67% by “Convenience to your job”.

The issue of accessibility and convenience exposes a major challenge, beyond the scope of mere transportation planning. Development in Greenville County is primarily auto-centric, having been largely guided by auto-oriented thinking. This has resulted in the typical problem associated with quick urban and suburban growth – urban sprawl. Residential densities remain low across the county as suburban subdivisions continue to grow and

residents continue to prefer to live in outlying communities and commute in to work. The relatively low levels of population density combined with a general lack of mixed-use development centered around transit-oriented nodes further decreases the efficiency of public transportation and make expansion both difficult and costly. A re-orientation of public thinking regarding development towards transit-centered planning and policy-making is necessary for Greenville County to move towards a world-class public transportation system.

In addition to these structural challenges, Greenlink also faces several perception challenges. Lack of awareness continues to present a significant challenge to expanding the customer base. As noted above, in a recent survey, 36% of respondents said they were “Not familiar at all” or had “Never heard” of Greenlink. And while 64% reported some familiarity with Greenlink, only 14% gave the highest possible response, “Very familiar.”

In a survey of 36 stakeholders conducted for the Greenlink Transit Vision and Master Plan, the respondents indicated that a leading challenge facing Greenlink is a clear lack of public confidence based on past performance and funding issues. Though most of the respondents indicated that service has improved since the City of Greenville took over management of GTA, it is also clear that respondents believe the current system is still perceived as unreliable, not serving the needs of the community, and needing expansion to outlying areas before it can attract riders. Lack of funding was listed on the top of the list of current challenges by most respondents with several references to concerns about cost of operation versus car ownership. Finally, several responding stakeholders indicated that while Greenville has experienced significant growth in recent decades, for most traveling by car remains very easy making it difficult to give up their automobiles in order to use a different means of transportation. In addition, Greenlink staff analysis suggests the persistence of belief among the community that public transportation is only for the transit-dependent. There is a stigma associated with use of public transportation. This stigma combined with the present impracticality of public transportation for many choice riders makes attracting such riders extremely difficult. Thus, both of these issues must be addressed before any

substantial expansion of the customer base can be achieved.

Finally, a chief marketing objective as discussed below is to obtain support for a dedicated funding source leading to a dedicated funding source. However, this too represents a significant challenge due to the fact that registered voters (whose opinions are somewhat represented above) frequently view the system as irrelevant to their needs and lifestyles. Further, it is the belief of Greenlink staff that many view the system as underused, unnecessary and inefficient on a county-wide level. This belief is often exacerbated by the sight around the city of half empty to almost entirely empty buses. Ironically, in order to increase use of the buses, substantial system improvements such as shorter headways will be required. Without additional funding these improvements are cost prohibited. In addition, reducing headways would actually require more buses rather than less which, from a public perception standpoint, could appear to be a move in the wrong direction given the noted appearance that many buses currently operate well below capacity.

However, many in our community do not understand the realities of efficiencies in public transportation systems or the future ramifications of failure to invest in developing a better system now. No transportation system in the world operates with 100% cost efficiency regarding fare box revenue in relation to operating expense. All public transit systems must, therefore, be subsidized in some way. In this case, the necessary increase in subsidization (most likely in the form of a tax-based dedicated funding source) will be required before the significant system improvements that would make the system attractive to a broader base of riders could be implemented. It is necessary, therefore, that the public recognize the importance of beginning to invest more heavily in public transit before the County reaches a point where the entire transportation system (including roadways and personal automobiles) is stretched beyond capacity. At that point, the necessary public transit improvements will be far more costly than they would today. However, in such a difficult economic time when taxes and government spending are treated with suspicion at best the challenge in getting those who currently don't use the system or see it as necessary to invest in funding it through a dedicated tax source is readily clear.

1.3 Opportunities

While the challenges facing Greenlink are significant and must be addressed, several key opportunities also exist which should be noted and maximized. The first of these opportunities is community growth. As noted above, Greenville County is growing rapidly. From 2000 to 2010 the County population grew by nearly 19%, roughly twice the national average. This kind of growth is anticipated to continue for the foreseeable future. Such growth could lead to an increased need for and, if marketed well, demand for public transportation options. In addition, with the appropriate increased recognition of the need for and value of public transportation, the increased population growth also demonstrates the long term potential to fund an expanded public transit system. In short, continued population growth provides both the warrant and means for enhanced public transportation.

Another warrant for enhancing public transportation services arises from the negative externalities associated of growth. Primary among these is the recent increase in the cost of gas. In addition to higher gas prices, continued population growth combined with an auto-centric transportation system inevitably leads to growth in traffic congestion. Finally, more cars on the road also contributes to growth in air pollution. Among other ways, an increase in air pollution can negatively impact a community trying to attract new business by causing that community to fail to reach clean air attainment status. This failure results in the loss of certain tax incentives designed to help communities attract new business and industry. Together, the growth in gas prices, traffic congestion and pollution all create the opportunity for Greenlink to demonstrate the community benefits of alternative forms of transportation. By exposing the growing costs related to an auto-centric system of transportation, Greenlink can position itself as an alternative that would help to save our community financially and significantly conserve natural resources.

Unfortunately, the case that Greenlink could be a legitimate county-wide alternative to a transportation system almost entirely built around the personal automobile might have been a difficult one to make ten years ago. Operating inefficiencies and negative public perception of the service led to a significant lack of confidence in the viability of the system. However, recent years have brought a growing, renewed sense of confidence as key operational factors such as on-time performance, cleanliness and safety of the sys-

tem have dramatically improved. Significant steps have been taken in re-branding the system as “Greenlink” and, under the city’s operation, efforts at re-constructing the public image of the system have been successful. While there is still room for improvement, particularly in the area of overall visibility and awareness, recent system successes have created the kind of foundation or track record which could be leveraged in pursuit of more funding and expanded services. Greenlink has demonstrated in recent years that it can and will be a good steward of public resources. This kind of confidence is crucial to growing a publicly owned transportation system. The presence of this confidence represents a key opportunity going forward.

Along with the increased public confidence, Greenlink has also enjoyed improved political relationships leading to an increase in political goodwill towards the Greenlink system. Greenlink staff have been effective at rectifying past errant approaches in relating with other government agencies, councils and personnel. These positive relationships now represent an opportunity in the form of openness to consider proposals and requests by political leaders and councils at all levels of government within the county.

Finally, as will be demonstrated in section 3.0 (Target Markets) below, a major opportunity for Greenlink is found in underserved or unreached markets. Greenlink’s current ridership is largely confined to a very narrow market. Most riders come from a demographic which would qualify them as transit-dependent riders. While even among these riders, more effective marketing could yield an increase in ridership, there are entire markets which are virtually untapped in terms of potential riders which could be converted into system users. These sizeable markets represent significant opportunity for growth of the public transportation system in Greenville County.

2.1 Raise Public Awareness

GTA has a long term goal of obtaining a dedicated funding source through successful approval of a tax referendum. However, as noted in the Current Challenges section above, a major impediment to passing such a referendum is a significant lack of public awareness. People will not vote to increase taxes in support of a service of which they are unaware or see as irrelevant to their needs. Therefore, increasing public awareness of Greenlink services is a necessity if Greenlink is to acquire the funding vital to long term viability and growth. Raising public awareness will also serve to increase ridership on existing routes and services. As will be discussed further below, there are several potential target markets which are currently not reached or under-reached due in significant part to the lack of awareness that services exist which might be helpful for them. Specifically, the marketing plan must seek to develop a public image which communicates that public transportation is not merely a service for the transit-dependent. Brand awareness has been greatly enhanced by recent coordination of signage and re-striping of bus fleet but consistent branding must continue to be an emphasis as Greenlink grows. Finally, steps must be taken to eliminate awareness of how Greenlink operates as a barrier to use. A lack of familiarity with how to utilize public transportation can be intimidating or discouraging and remains a significant barrier to use among certain communities.

2.2 Develop Public/Private Partnerships

A key means of expanding service without a dedicated funding source is the development of public/private partnerships. Public/private partnership describes a government service or private business venture which is funded and operated through a partnership between a government agency and one or more private sector companies. The benefit to this arrangement is that it allows the maximum amount of value to be leveraged from both public and private funding sources in support of a shared interest. The primary advantage to Greenlink in this arrangement is that the private sector companies or organizations bear the operating costs of the service. The primary advantage for the

private sector companies or organizations is the opportunity to take advantage of Greenlink's position as a recipient of federal funds and experience operating transit services, thereby increasing overall efficiency. This kind of arrangement inevitably results in lower costs for the private partners than if they had attempted to provide service for their employees or patrons on their own. Greenlink has experienced significant success with this in the past in the form of the partnership with both CU-ICAR and the St. Francis Hospital System. The shuttle service that has resulted from that partnership is an excellent model of the kind of expansion that is most readily accessible to Greenlink prior to the introduction of a designated funding source. This model should be a primary focus of marketing efforts going forward.

2.3 Improve Ridership Experience/Promotions

No promotional campaign will be successful in the long run if it is not backed by an improved experience among current and new riders. Therefore, the marketing plan must continue to assess the rider experience on the current Greenlink routes and recommend necessary improvements that will encourage loyalty and increased use among existing riders as well as attract and retain new riders. Several weaknesses in ridership experience have already been noted above in the Current Challenges. Specific strategies will be identified in Section 4 for addressing as many of those weaknesses as possible given current resource constraints.

2.4 Expand Service Area

Greenlink has been perceived as primarily benefiting the city of Greenville, but is designed and positioned to become a truly regional public transportation provider. We are already finalizing plans to expand service to include the municipalities of Mauldin and Simpsonville and the potential exists to expand Greenlink's service to incorporate other municipalities and areas. The regionalization of Greenlink service would significantly benefit the entire upstate. With expansions currently being considered it would be possible to board a Greenlink bus in Travelers Rest and travel to Fountain Inn without using a personal automobile. With continued investment into such a regional system, such a trip could not only be possible but even efficient. As commuting travel increases from outlying municipalities into the City of

Greenville, particularly the Central Business District, as well as between the outlying areas themselves, a robust, central, truly regional public transportation system would provide alternative means of travel – reducing travel costs, pollution, traffic congestion, etc. and enhancing economic development.

In addition to the benefits to the community, an expanded service area is also critical to the fifth marketing objective, obtaining support for a dedicated funding source. The kind of funding source necessary for the long term financial viability of Greenlink/GTA would necessarily come from the County level. Presently, however, Greenlink is viewed, by those aware of our presence, as primarily a service by and for the City of Greenville. This perception is unlikely to lead to the kind of County-wide support necessary for the approval of a funding source from Greenville County. In order to garner the necessary support Greenlink must be able to demonstrate the benefits enjoyed by municipalities and areas outside the City of Greenville. This means regionalizing our services by expanding our service area.

2.5 Obtain Support for a Dedicated Funding Source

The fifth and final marketing objective for this marketing plan is to obtain support for a dedicated funding source. Greenlink's current funding structure is insufficient for long term viability. At current funding levels, even a streamlined service adequate only for the needs of the transit-dependent would be difficult to maintain over time. In addition, development of a more robust transportation system which would attract users from different demographics and stimulate growth and economic development in the region will be impossible given current funding constraints. The supply of a dedicated funding source will ultimately depend on the will of the residents of Greenville County expressed through a tax referendum. The target date for such a referendum is November 2016. A significant and robust public transportation system should be something that is chosen by rather than forced upon county residents. However, that choice should be an informed one, which is not possible given the current awareness among the general public. Therefore, this marketing plan is designed to both demonstrate the potential benefits to be gained through an enhanced and expanded transit system across the county and region through expanding services to serve those populations and to educate the general population through an intensive public education campaign about the many benefits gained by commu-

nities that invest in public transportation. These two overall efforts should lead to an educated decision by county residents whether or not to invest in public transportation through approval of a dedicated funding source.

3.1 Summary

For clarity, target markets will be divided into two primary groups. While it is important to recognize that an effective marketing plan will involve marketing our brand and services to those who are not direct users of our system, it is equally valuable to observe the distinction between these “secondary stakeholders” and those who are direct customers or users of our services. Direct customers are those who actually board our buses or use our other transportation services and are designated in this section as “primary stakeholders”. It is Greenlink’s belief that the entire community benefits from an effective public transportation system, whether one personally uses the system or not. Thus, both the direct and indirect beneficiaries of public transportation should be made aware of those benefits. In addition, it should be noted that the terms “primary” and “secondary” are intended only to communicate the distinction between direct and indirect beneficiaries of public transportation service. It is not to be understood as prioritization or ordering in relation to marketing emphasis. Both groups require equal attention in marketing efforts if Greenlink is to be successful, particularly in achieving a dedicated funding source.

3.2 Primary Stakeholders

3.2.a Students/Universities

Colleges and universities along with students represent an ideal target market. Even with an increasing number of students having access to a personal vehicle while on campus, there is still a significant portion which do not. For example, Furman University states that over 8% of students do not have a personal vehicle on campus. With an undergraduate population of more than 2700 students this means that over 215 students are likely transit dependent. Other universities and colleges are likely to



have higher percentages of students without access to personal vehicles. Therefore, many students are transit dependent. Together with the institutions in which they are enrolled, this makes for an ideal market to target as the costs of access can either be absorbed by the educational institution or passed through to the students in the form of a vehicle registration or other kind of fee. Either way, students could be given access to the system fare free with a valid ID encouraging use. However, even without subsidization from the institutions themselves, students remain a viable target market due to their transportation needs, openness to using new systems, lack of familiarity with the area and, for some, their transit-dependent status. Finally, students are ideal because they are less likely to be off put by the existing stigma connected with public transit and more willing to try the system. This makes them an excellent market to bridge between current transit-dependent users and acquiring more choice users as students would perhaps seem more readily identifiable with choice users, helping to dispel the stigma that public transit is for transit-dependent riders only and encouraging choice users to see it as a resource for people like themselves. Finally, many of these students will undoubtedly choose to remain in Greenville County upon graduation and, having gained exposure to and experience with the Greenlink system as a student, will be much more likely to utilize it as a professional themselves. Thus, targeting students now is also an effective means of targeting the professionals of tomorrow, which is another strategic goal.

As noted above, nearly 24,000 students study within Greenville County (not including more than 25,000 Continuing Education students enrolled at Greenville Technical College). If only five percent of these 24,000 students chose to utilize public transportation and rode only five times per month it would increase Greenlink’s fixed route passenger total by 11% from the 2009 total of 654,992 (adding 72,000 passengers per year). Thus, the student population in the Greenlink service area is significant and, if effectively reached through marketing strategies, could substantially increase Greenlink ridership both in the immediate future and in the long term future.



3.2.b Professionals

The combined percentage of the total workforce in Greenville County composed of those employed in management, business, science, art, sales and office related occupations is 61.6%. Thus, a significant percentage of Greenville residents are employed in what would traditionally be considered professional vocations. Based on current staff experience, few if any of these individuals use public transportation to commute to work. Many of these professionals commute into central Greenville from outlying areas/communities and even other counties.⁹ If public transportation is to grow into a more significant role as a means of transportation and part of community life in Greenville County in the future, it is necessary to attract some of these professionals to become regular Greenlink customers. This is important for multiple reasons. First, as many of these individuals likely live outside the primary business district located around downtown Greenville and commute in to work, public transit has the potential to provide a significant service by providing a faster, less stressful commute during which the rider can be engaged in other activities besides driving (and potentially waiting in traffic). Second, as the number of these kinds of commuters continues to increase in Greenville County, unless some kind of alternative commute pattern is developed traffic problems will continue to rise, increasing frustration and hampering the attraction of new residents and businesses and, therefore, economic development in the region. Converting a significant number of these professionals to public transit for their daily commute will reduce traffic congestion during these key, high traffic times creating a significant positive impact upon our community's health and growth potential. Further, there are a very significant number of riders to be gained if this market could be successfully reached obviously generating a positive revenue increase for Greenlink. Finally, the professional market makes up a significant portion of the voting population and exercises significant influence in the political process. Thus, gaining their patronage not only helps by adding revenue to the bottom line but is also a key means of achieving the tax referendum so critical to the long term sustainability of Greenlink.

The realization of this benefit, of course, assumes positive experiences and a growing awareness among this population as to the importance of investing in public transportation systems for the long term health, growth

and sustainability of our community. Thus, to reach this critical market much more than a clever advertising campaign will be necessary. It is possible to reach and acquire customers from this demographic, but significant improvements must be made in the existing system and then a message crafted communicating these improvements must be effectively targeted and delivered to this population. These improvements might consist of such elements as offering free Wi-Fi access on board, reducing the headway from an hour to no more than 30 minutes, decreasing travel times (possibly requiring right of way or streetscape modifications), increasing accessibility of the system to those not living directly on a bus route (such as enhancing the interface between greenways and the fixed route system or developing park-and-ride lots), etc. While it is not essential for these to occur simultaneously, without these kinds of system improvements, all advertising efforts aimed at attracting this new market would likely be a waste of resources. In addition, marketing efforts to this demographic must highlight and promote the many benefits of public transportation both to the public and private sectors. As noted above, among the benefits of public transportation with significant relevance to the business and professional community are economic development and environmental sustainability. Data supporting these benefits may be found in Appendix 1. This data must be appropriately packaged and effectively delivered to this target market.



3.2.c Hispanic population

As noted above, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, the Hispanic population in the state of South Carolina is growing faster than any other state in the nation. In Greenville County, the Hispanic percentage of the population has increased from 3.8% to 8.1% over the last 10 years. However, despite Greenlink's development of a Title VI Plan, including an emphasis on accessibility to its services by Limited

9. See Figure 2, p. 5.

English Proficiency (LEP) individuals (specifically those who speak Spanish), the Census reports that no persons who identified themselves as speaking English “less than very well” utilized public transportation in Greenville County. This is clearly a missed opportunity to reach and serve a population which is growing quickly and likely to have a significant need for transportation services. Clearly, reaching this population will require more than providing maps and posting internal signage on board buses in Spanish as well as English. A much more intentional and focused marketing effort will be required.

Marketing to the Hispanic population will need to account for more than language accessibility. Messages will, of course, need to be communicated in Spanish. But these messages will need to articulate the specific benefits of public transit which uniquely address the needs of these communities. In addition, they will need to be well positioned in key areas where they are likely to be exposed to the Hispanic population. This would include not only strategically placed advertisements but also communicating with those individuals and organizations which specifically target and assist these communities such as social service organizations, government assistance agencies, and churches. Getting the Greenlink message to these organizations and agencies will create significant exposure to the Hispanic population.

Such marketing efforts could provide a significant return on investment. With a total Hispanic population of 36,495 persons in Greenville County, if five percent of these individuals were converted to public transit and utilized the system five times a month, this could result in an increase of 109,485 passenger trips per year. At a fare rate of \$1.50 per ride this increase would generate \$164,227.50 in additional revenue. Even a conversion of two percent of this population riding five times per month would result in an increase of 43,794 passengers per year and \$65,691.00 in revenue.

3.2.d Elderly

The elderly represent a viable target market. Many elderly persons become either unable to drive or uncomfortable driving, making public transportation a relevant option for their mobility needs. However, despite the fact that this population is likely to greatly benefit from public transportation many are unlikely to use it before they

have to as a result of declining health. But at the point of dependency upon transit as a result of health related inability to provide one’s own transportation, many would require service more akin to demand response. While a valuable service and important component of the Greenlink system, this kind of service is much more expensive and less efficient than our fixed route service. Thus, while this group is certainly a valuable customer base, the goal of marketing to this demographic would be to convert older choice riders before they become transit dependent.

12.8% of the population of Greenville County is age 65 or older. As Greenville’s reputation as an excellent retirement location continues to develop, this number of senior-aged residents in the County is likely to only continue to increase. Another benefit of marketing to this community is their wealth of discretionary time and increased activity. Retirement also affords many senior citizens the opportunity to travel, run errands, meet with friends, etc. during hours when younger individuals are at work, thus creating demand for public transit during times with typically lower ridership. In addition, many individuals remain active well into their retirement. Their travel needs may include medical appointments, shopping and community events. Convenience and accessibility of shelters and stops as well as ease of use of the system and the perceived safety and cleanliness of the system are requisites for attracting elderly choice riders. These elements have been significantly improved in recent years, but attention must continue to be given to them and their presence effectively communicated to the senior population. Again, alongside strategically placed advertisements, individuals and organizations with frequent contact with the senior population should be targeted with tailored messages espousing the benefits of public transit to senior citizens. As with the Hispanic population, building relationships with these “gatekeepers” (addressed again below) and empowering them with information about and assistance in using the Greenlink system is key to reaching this community with the Greenlink message.

3.2.e Disabled

This market is very similar in needs and opportunities as the elderly discussed above. Clearly, disabled persons are often unable to provide their own transportation. Thus, targeting this market makes sense and would primarily require/involve crafting a sensitive message effectively targeted and delivered to those among this unique community demonstrating the pres-

ence of the public transit system as well as educating them in how to utilize it. Effective channels for reaching this community would likely include medical and therapy providers, government agencies, social service organizations and assisted living and group homes.

While not likely to be the highest revenue generating investment of marketing resources, serving this community should remain an ethically responsible priority as a recipient of public funds and provider of a public service. Thus, cost-effective means of marketing to this community should be sought, including but not necessarily limited to the dissemination of informative and educational materials to the service organizations listed above. While Greenlink must continue to move, as many public providers of transportation services are doing, towards thinking more like a private company, it cannot afford to cease recognizing the responsibility it bears as a steward of public resources. One of the primary reasons for public entities such as Greenlink is to provide services to the community that would not be efficient or financially feasible for private organizations concerned only with generating revenue. Moving forward, Greenlink must begin to think and act more like a private company trying to attract and retain customers who have a choice as to which transportation means/service they will use while at the same time continuing to focus on the vulnerable communities it is incumbent upon public entities to serve.

3.2.f Cyclists

As home to such prominent local cyclists as George Hincapie and the annual USA Cycling Pro Championship, Greenville is recognized nationally as a biking community. Well beyond those of the professional ranks, however, biking has become not only a popular form of recreation but a way of life for many in the Greenville community. With developments such as the Swamp Rabbit Trail a growing number in Greenville are beginning to see bicycling as a viable mode of transportation for everything from running errands to commuting to work to reaching recreational destinations. Cycling has become such a signature element of Greenville's culture that the City has developed a bicycle friendly community initiative known as Bikeville, the goal of which is "to increase ridership, encourage bicycle use, expand bicycling facilities, and provide useful educational resources to cyclists and motorists to share the road."¹⁰ In partnership with Greenville's bike initiative, Greenlink has developed the "Rack N Ride" program to enable easier, more convenient use



of the bus system by cyclists. An instructional video for how to use the bike racks on the buses is available on the Greenlink website.

However, there is much more potential in continuing to target marketing efforts towards this community. Those who use bicycles significantly as a means of transportation have clearly already committed to pursuing alternative means of transportation. Therefore, marketing to this group is not likely to require heavy efforts to persuade them of the value of alternative forms of transportation and away from an allegiance to the single passenger use of a personal automobile. Rather, marketing efforts to this group must simply demonstrate that Greenlink offers services consistent with their values, conducive to the lifestyle they prefer and which greatly expands the potential use of their preferred form of transportation. Primarily, it must be demonstrated that Greenlink and the bicycling infrastructure are really two parts of one major alternative transportation system. As noted of students above, this community also has significant potential as an in-road to the professional market since many cyclists would also be included in that demographic. All stakeholders in the cycling market should be targeted with a message that communicates the consistency of the two forms of transportation with one another and the opportunity to expand the use of each with the other. Given the significant number and visibility of bike infrastructure elements, bike shops, riding groups, local races, etc., finding avenues of direct marketing to this community should not be difficult.



10. <http://www.greenvillesc.gov/ParksRec/Trails/bikeville.aspx>

3.2.g Tourists/Visitors

Whether for business or recreation, Greenville County continues to become increasingly popular as a destination for travelers. These visitors make up a significant potential market for public transit. Many business travelers arrive by plane, often requiring a car rental. This expense could easily be eliminated and much more cost effective travel arranged through use of public transportation. As the fixed route system develops alongside more effective public transit options around the City of Greenville's CBD, this more efficient option will become much more appealing. In addition, those who visit downtown City of Greenville for non-business purposes either for the day or for longer stays could be persuaded to use public transportation in lieu of traveling by personal automobile given the European-like development which discourages parking within the central downtown corridor. Just as for business travelers, the appeal to use the public option would be greatly strengthened by enhancements to the downtown service. As an example, this could include expanding the trolley service to run daily in the evenings and regularly on weekends. If such enhancements are possible, it makes sense to target these groups with marketing efforts. However, if such enhancements are not possible then it is unlikely that enough visitors could be persuaded to rely on current services to justify a targeted marketing program.

3.3 Secondary Stakeholders

3.3.a Major Employers

Major area employers should also be targeted in a public transit marketing plan. Employers may offer to sponsor a commuter benefits program as a service to their employees. These programs allow eligible employees to have costs for transportation services taken out of their pre-tax earnings thus providing additional savings and incentive for using alternative forms of transportation. Employers, in turn, benefit from reduced payroll taxes, a significant benefit that should be communicated and which has the potential to persuade major employers to offer such a program. They might even offer to subsidize the employees portion of the cost as part of their benefits package as an incentive

in recruiting employees. In addition, such programs have been found to be very popular with employees and provide direct benefits in employee morale and productivity.¹¹ In getting major employers to offer such commuter benefit programs employees are financially incentivized to consider alternative forms of commute. If this incentive to "try out" public transit can be coupled with positive experiences then new choice riders can be acquired and maintained. Again, this target market serves as an indirect means of entering the market for transportation of professionals currently dominated in our region by the personal automobile.

3.3.b Property Developers

As noted above, among the current challenges facing Greenlink (like many other such systems) is the lack of cohesively designed mixed use developments around transportation-oriented nodes. Instead development appears to occur in a much more typically suburban pattern with sharp and often distant separation between residential and commercial areas. This kind of development keeps population densities low and makes efficient public transit virtually impossible. Thus, property developers (along with city planners) should be educated as to the importance of working with Greenlink in future developments. Such collaboration will not only benefit the community at large but also increase property values around the transportation nodes, a benefit which should not be lost on property developers.

3.3.c Voters/Public Officials

Voters and public officials should be targeted with strategic messages designed to demonstrate the importance of developing a strong public transportation system. Since the long term viability and sustainability of Greenlink depends heavily upon the introduction of some kind of significant dedicated funding source such as a tax referendum, it is critical that both public officials who help significantly to shape public policy as well as the voting public at large which would ultimately decide the fate of such a referendum must be educated regarding the need for proactive and forward thinking transportation patterns in our community. The significant and multi-layered benefits of working to develop our transit system now, before we

11. <http://www.1800234ride.com/commutertaxbenefit>

reach a critical stage of congestion, pollution, and economic bottlenecking, should be effectively communicated. Though this effort will not immediately result in increased revenue, due to the long-term high revenue potential it must be considered a high priority. This kind of education can be pursued through public forums, educational pieces and programs distributed through the mass media, educational programs aimed at schools, advertising campaigns, mail flyers, etc.¹²

3.3.d Media

Continuing to strengthen relationships with local media and provide them with positive messages about the Greenlink system will serve broadly to reach many, if not all, of the target markets above. Positive news articles, reports on the evening news, etc. all serve to increase the exposure and awareness of Greenlink to the public broadly. This kind of marketing has the distinct advantages of being inexpensive or even free and coming from a third party source creating a distinctly different impact than traditional advertising and helping to validate the message to potential customers. Strong, positive relationships with media personnel will serve to position Greenlink to receive more such coverage in the various media outlets as well as to better insure that that coverage is positive in tone. In addition, continuing to supply the media with messages and information in support of the communal benefits of public transit, if disseminated to the public, will serve to advance the goal of receiving a tax referendum for a dedicated funding source. Of course, with this kind of marketing it is very important for Greenlink as an organization to control the narrative by being proactive about disseminating information through these channels and even in responding to negative incidents. Some staff time should be devoted to cultivating these kinds of relationships and supplying positive material about Greenlink for the various news media.

3.4 Priorities and Potential Conflicts

It should be recognized that the pursuit of certain target markets

12. APTA has a list of quick facts detailing the community benefit to investing in public transportation which might be useful in developing such materials and programs. See Appendix 3.

might actually conflict with one another. For example, while this should in no way be interpreted as reflecting the values and opinions of GTA or Greenlink staff, there are likely to be those among the professional market that avoid public transportation in part to avoid contact or association with those in the low income or otherwise transit dependent population. Therefore, while all of the above target markets represent valuable potential clientele with reasonable assurance of expanding our ridership, they should be prioritized in light of larger goals (such as a tax referendum) and ordered accordingly in a timeline of marketing initiatives which recognizes their potential impact upon one another.

(The specific strategies will be grouped beneath the specific marketing objective they are intended to accomplish.) Tasks should be pursued in general consistency with the attached Marketing Milestone Timeline in Appendix 1.

4.1 Increase Public Awareness

4.1.a Increase Media Exposure

Staff should be assigned to strengthen existing relationships and cultivate positive new relationships with local media outlets in order to manage media exposure. The management activity should include providing press releases, notifying media of appropriate events and significant storylines. The intent should be to control the narrative being communicated through local media to the public. However, an equally important goal should be to increase the amount of coverage. The media are an excellent source of low cost or even free marketing with a wide audience. Attention should be directed not simply to the introduction of new services or significant purchases but to human interest stories as well. This kind of coverage can effectively communi-



Figure 7: Mock up of billboard for Greenlink marketing campaign theme for professionals

cate how Greenlink is a necessary service that is already improving the quality of life in Greenville County. The local media should also be made aware of national and statewide legislation regarding transportation and their effects upon our local community. It would also be helpful to alert the media's attention to facts and figures that underscore the case for need for public transportation in a community.

4.1.b Public Education (or Introduction) Campaign

One of the most significant issues facing Greenlink's continued development, expansion and eventual acquisition of a dedicated funding source is the significant lack of overall community awareness. There are still many within the community who are not familiar with what Greenlink is or even aware of the presence of a growing public transportation system in Greenville County. This lack of awareness is particularly prominent among key target markets such as business professionals. Even those who are aware that some sort of system exists due to seeing Greenlink buses around town are completely unaware of where and how to access the system, where it runs and how it could benefit them. In addition, many of these don't know where or lack the incentive to seek out answers to such questions. For many of these current non-riders the ease of personal automobile use has not yet lowered to the point of incentivizing them to actively pursue options they are much less familiar with. In order to address this issue a public introduction/education campaign should be pursued.

Task 1: Produce a city-wide mail-out (a lower cost option which could be considered in place of a mail-out would be an advertisement in local newspapers). This mail-out should be simple and clean. It should articulate basically who we are and where we're going. I.e. "Hi. We're Greenlink. And we're going somewhere." As an alternative, this mail-out could potentially be tied to introducing the new CAD-AVL system. The mail-out could also be followed up with a city-wide "ride for free" day to encourage new riders to try the service.

Task 2: Conduct a series of geographically targeted pub-

lic forums. These forums would seek to engage particular communities with the Greenlink service, brand and vision. They would be both an opportunity to expose and to learn. Ideally the forums would introduce Greenlink and educate the public regarding the benefits of the current system. This should improve accessibility and, ultimately, ridership among select target markets. Specifically these forums should target areas such as Augusta Road, Laurens Road, North Main, Overbrook, etc. (areas that could potentially use the current system). The series could be titled “Imagine Greenville Truly Linked”. The forum series could also be conducted in connection with the mail-out campaign with the mail-outs serving as both a broad introduction to Greenlink and an announcement of and invitation to the forum series. Used in tandem with the public forum series, possible content for the mail-out are as follows (these are suggestions and should not be considered an exclusive or exhaustive list): “Hi. We’re Greenlink. Wanna drive?” “Hi. We’re Greenlink, where to?” “Hi. We’re Greenlink. And we’re going somewhere. Wanna help chart the course?” Or possibly picturing a GPS type screen with the wording below “Where to Greenville?” “Imagine our future linked”. “Hi. We’re Greenlink. And we want to meet you.” “Hi. We’re Greenlink. And we want to hear from you.”

4.1.c Market Greenlink to professionals to increase ridership among this target group

As noted above in Section II, one of the key target markets for Greenlink going forward will be professionals. In order to gain riders from this critical market, a focused marketing plan must be in place. Since we are unlikely to acquire riders from this demographic to our fixed route system at its current level of service, it will be necessary to pursue this market through a phased plan in which initial riders are acquired through a service more readily accessible to their current needs and desires. A general marketing plan targeting professionals is unlikely to be successful at acquiring riders from that target market until significant system improvements have been made. Thus, system improvements must be completed prior to the introduction of a targeted marketing campaign. The introduction of a phased approach to system improvements designed to attract professionals is dis-

cussed below in section 4.3 Improve Ridership Experience/Promotions. The following task details the marketing that should occur subsequent to those system improvements targeted to business professionals.

Task 1: Develop and implement marketing campaign to professionals. Upon completion of system analysis and necessary system enhancements, a marketing campaign promoting the key features among those enhancements relevant to business professionals should be developed and implemented. This would include the development of a slogan (i.e. “What could you be doing if you weren’t driving?”) and campaign ads to be displayed on billboards and possibly in local periodicals and newspapers. See Figure 7. This slogan and ad series could potentially be developed in house to lower expenses or, depending upon available funding, outsourced for a more professional appearance. The advertisements would run for one to two months upon completion of the system enhancements. If funding permits, a separate marketing campaign could be run prior to the “release date” of the new service features to heighten anticipation for the improvements.

4.1.d Develop marketing materials/packages for specific “gatekeepers”

Gatekeepers here is a term used to describe those who serve as direct or primary contact points with particular populations such as the elderly, disabled, low income or Hispanic communities. Gatekeepers include social services, non-profit organizations, churches and ministries, and government agencies. The services offered by Greenlink to the particular communities mentioned above should be marketed to the persons and organizations which serve them. Often these organizations provide a means of direct contact with and influence in the decisions made by those within these communities, including means of transportation. In addition, as has been suggested above, it is quite possible that many among these particular communities are unaware of or intimidated by public transit options. Those who are unfamiliar with the system and how to access and utilize it are unlikely to become

regular riders. Gatekeepers, if effectively marketed and trained, can be a source of direct contact for those who are looking for alternative transportation options. Therefore, ensuring that gatekeepers are well informed of the Greenlink transportation system and the ways to best access and utilize it for the communities they serve should be a marketing priority. The advantage of marketing through gatekeepers is that they can be very inexpensively delivered. The primary expense would be staff time as staff would need to set appointments with various gatekeepers and personally deliver the materials.

Task 1: A list of primary gatekeepers should be developed as well as specific messages crafted to communicate to them the presence and potential of public transportation for their clients.

Task 2: Develop training materials and maps/schedules specifically to distribute to these persons so that they could pass them on to their respective communities. While it might be necessary to outsource some of the development of marketing materials to distribute to gatekeepers (i.e. brochures and maps designed or Spanish speakers), it would be possible to develop some of the materials in house in order to minimize costs.

Task 3: Develop “Ride with us” Spanish outreach materials. In order to better target the Hispanic community, marketing materials in Spanish should be developed and delivered to appropriate gatekeepers as well as kept at the transfer center. This should be a priority project as there are currently very few and possibly no Hispanic persons using the Greenlink system, yet high potential to acquire riders from this demographic. The materials could be developed under the slogan “Ride with us” and should include both a brochure explaining the Greenlink system and route maps/schedules printed in Spanish. It is significant that the slogan “Ride with us” carries an inclusive connotation. These materials should be developed and distributed as soon as possible. This project could be done in

house except for the translation which could be outsourced or the entire project could be outsourced.

Task 4: Develop targeted marketing materials for the elderly/disabled with slogan “We’re here for you.” The message, “We’re here for you” reminds the elderly and/or disabled person that public transportation is a public service intended, in part, to provide for the transportation needs he or she can’t provide for himself or herself. It communicates concern and empathy as well as accessibility. Like the Spanish marketing materials, these materials will be most effectively disseminated through a network of gatekeepers with regular contact with these communities. A single brochure detailing the Greenlink system with an emphasis on rider access and demand response service would be sufficient for this strategy. This brochure could easily be developed in house.

Task 5: Assign staff to schedule appointments to deliver materials to gatekeepers and explain the Greenlink system and how their clients might best take advantage of it.

4.1.e Increase presence at public venues/events

Greenville regularly hosts public events such as Fall for Greenville, USA Pro Cycling Championships and the July 4th Wells Fargo Red, White and Blue, among others. These would make excellent venues for exposure of the Greenlink brand and service. Greenlink could consider providing shuttle service to support these events as a means of exposing our brand and service. We could also consider sponsorship of these events. At Fall for Greenville, and possibly more, it is also an option to host a booth where information could be distributed and gifts could be given away along with personal conversations with those who were interested in learning more about the services Greenlink provides. These events could provide a relatively inexpensive way to network in the community and reach markets currently unaware of or disinclined to use our services. These markets would include business professionals, students, and cyclists.

4.1.f Initial Promotions to Pursue

A significant element of the marketing plan for Greenlink is to promote our services, particularly to those who are currently unaware or inexperienced with them. Specific promotions should be employed in order to encourage such persons to try the Greenlink system. The majority of these promotions should be intentionally designed to encourage new ridership, not simply to offer something to existing riders. That is they should be geared towards increasing exposure of and education about what our current system has to offer. However, rewards for current riders should be considered as well. In addition, internal promotions should also be pursued in order to continue to strengthen the Greenlink brand and develop employee morale, loyalty and enthusiasm. Promotions should be innovative and cost effective. One of the most obvious low-cost, innovative means of promotion in today's market is social media and networking. These options should be thoroughly explored for marketing potential. For maximum effectiveness, promotions should be well marketed through e-mail, mail-outs, television and print ads, and other means. Reflecting these priorities, the following promotions should be considered suggestions, not an exhaustive list.

- *Customer Appreciation Day.*
- *"Try Transit Week" 2012*
- *Ride for free day in conjunction with educational mail-out (as above).*
- *Elementary school education program*
- *Flickr.com and/or Instagram promotion. Contest where the most creative picture wins a prize. Or maybe a free ride for every picture taken – "Pic it, for ticket" or "pix for tix".*
- *General social media promotion. "Post the Most" competition.*
- *Like us on Facebook by certain date and be entered into drawing for iPod touch .*
- *Welcome packet to new residents including a map of the closest bus route or full route map and a few free ride passes.*



- *"Take the bus, have a meal on us." "Take the bus and coffee's on us." Could work with a particular coffee company to share the cost of this promotion.*

4.1.g Expand services and perception of service beyond "just a bus service"

Greenlink is committed to playing a leading role in developing a true multi-modal transportation system in Greenville County. A significant component of this commitment is the development of the Bike Center in the third phase of the Transfer Center Development. As bike-related projects increase, accessibility to the fixed route bus service should improve resulting in increased ridership. Specifically, these improvements will enable Greenlink to better target the significant cycling community in Greenville, a community which has already demonstrated an openness to and even preference for alternative forms of transportation to the automobile. Furthermore, they represent the opportunity to continue to re-brand Greenlink as a true multi-modal transportation entity and not purely a bus-oriented transportation option for the transit dependent. The following developments are either underway or have been proposed.

1. Bike Center development
2. Bike Locker system
3. Bike rentals

Task 1: Develop marketing plan specific to each bike-related project or consider marketing two or all of the projects together.

Task 2: Produce map showing overlap of all bikeways and greenways with Greenlink fixed route system. This could be produced in a brochure form which could be distributed in bike shops, through bike clubs, along trails and greenways and through other appropriate channels. This map would help cyclists and other interested persons become better acquainted

with the multi-modal transportation system and how to best utilize it, noting helpful connection points, etc. If produced in a brochure form, it should include some helpful tips on how to use the system.

4.2 Develop Public/Private Partnerships

4.2.a Pursue Greenville Drive Partnership for Downtown trolley

Greenlink is currently in the process of assuming management of the downtown trolley system formerly operated by the Greenville Drive. The Drive own two trolleys and the service has been offered on Thursday and Friday evenings, Saturday and Sunday as well as on weekday evenings when the Drive are playing. While expanding service in the future remains a desirable possibility (see above under a.iii.1 “Initiate Lunchtime Downtown Trolley Service”), even if simply to maintain the current level of service, a public/private partnership between Greenlink and the Greenville Drive ought to be pursued. The benefit to Greenlink includes the operating expense of the service being provided by the Drive. Also, the Greenville Drive has become a significant fixture and popular attraction in the West End of the City of Greenville’s downtown. Attendance has been outstanding since the construction of Flour Field and, as evidence of community support and an organizational commitment to the area, the Drive recently signed a contract extension with the Boston Red Sox to keep the Minor League Affiliate in Greenville through 2016. It has developed into a significant brand in Greenville and a symbol of Greenville’s downtown revitalization and general city identity. Thus, creating a partnership with the Drive has appeal to Greenlink from a public relations and marketing standpoint as well. Connecting our brand to that of the Drive should make a positive public impression. The Greenville Drive is the kind of organization that Greenlink would like to be publicly connected with. Finally, a public/private partnership between Greenlink and the Drive could contribute to developing another significant community partner and advocate in our pursuit of a dedicated funding source. The Drive have indicated interest in retaining involvement in the trolley service.



Task 1: Purchase two additional trolleys and maintain the trolley service at its current level of service.

Task 2: Finalize public/private partnership agreement, signing contract between Greenlink and the Greenville Drive.

Task 3: Develop effective and attractive co-branding scheme for the service.

Task 4: Have new wraps for trolleys designed and installed. Accommodation for “Lunch Express” marking should be considered and allowed.

Task 5: Develop promotion plan that effectively re-introduces the service and the new management.

4.2.b Promote Public/Private Partnership Success

Until a dedicated funding source can be obtained, public/private partnerships will remain a critical component of financially sustainable growth for Greenlink. The St. Francis/CU-ICAR shuttle is an excellent example of the success of these kinds of arrangements. In addition, several more such partnerships are currently being pursued. Should these potential partnerships be converted into actual and successful projects then this success

should be promoted in pursuit of more partnerships.

Task 1: Develop “Highlight Reel” to showcase successful examples of public/private partnerships. If more public/private partnerships can be successfully implemented, a compelling narrative can be developed demonstrating to other potential partners the viability and mutual benefit to such arrangements. This history should be compiled and presented in an attractive form to use in presentations to potential future partners. The “Highlight Reel” should contain highlights from the partnerships including not only financial content but also use statistics and personal quotations from partners testifying to both the positive relationship established with Greenlink and the benefit of the partnership to their organization.

4.2.c Advocate for development of commuter benefit programs among local employers

Another means of encouraging the use of public transportation is through the implementation of commuter benefits programs. These programs allow employers to subsidize commuting expenses tax-exempt or for employees to have some of their pre-tax pay go towards commute expense if they use public transportation or bike to work. These benefits provide an incentive for professionals and other employees to consider riding the bus or utilizing other public transportation means of travel. Greenlink can encourage the development of these programs by advocating to area employers, including educating them on the nature of the program and the benefits it provides to the business or organization as a whole.

Task 1: Develop brochure which briefly and effectively communicates the benefits of commuter benefit programs to both employer and employees. These brochures should be designed with both distribution and use in conjunction with presentations in mind.

Task 2: A partner employer network list should be created showing those companies and organizations which are offering a commuter benefit program.

Task 3: Staff resources should be assigned to providing assistance to local businesses and organizations in setting up commuter benefits programs.

4.2.d Develop GSP/Downtown Hotel Group Express Route



A key component to both increasing public awareness of Greenlink as well as targeting visitors and tourists (one of the identified target markets) is through the creation and advertisement of the GSP/Downtown Greenville Express Route. This project,

already underway, will provide exceptional, direct route service between the hotels located in downtown Greenville and GSP International Airport. As a direct route service, the buses will arrive at both locations on thirty minute headways ensuring regular availability and short travel times between the airport and downtown Greenville – both critical elements to travelers, particularly business travelers. In addition, the buses will be equipped with extra-spacious seats, easy access for luggage, free on-board Wi-Fi and televisions. Finally, the service will be subsidized by the downtown Greenville hotel group in order to allow rates substantially lower than hiring a taxi or using another transportation service making the Express Route both more pleasant and cost effective. Such a service is projected to capture a significant portion of travelers arriving to Greenville for both pleasure and business but will specifically target business travelers. Both tourists and business travelers arriving by plane require transportation to and around Greenville once on the ground. With improved services including the GSP Express Route and other services, Greenlink will aim to make it possible to avoid the necessity of car rentals or other transportation solutions for visitors to the City of Greenville and surrounding areas. In addition, advertisements for the GSP Express service in the airport and

downtown hotels and restaurants will serve as well to market Greenlink services to the general public by both multiplying exposures to the Greenlink brand as well as sending the message that Greenlink is expanding and improving services.

Task 1: Prepare survey results to present to downtown hotel group.

Task 2: Finalize negotiations with downtown hotel group.

Task 3: Develop advertising partners with downtown hotels, restaurants and shops. The Express buses will be equipped with televisions and able to run advertisements developed by these businesses targeted to visitors to both the downtown area and Greenville at large. Advertising space to be run in loops on these on-board televisions will be sold to generate additional revenue.

Task 4: Develop advertising campaign for GSP Express Route. Ads should be placed in the airport and in the downtown hotels. Possibilities for ad slogans in the airport include: "Now the last leg of your journey can be the best." "Faster, more comfortable... and cheaper? Seriously, there's no catch." "Let's see... faster, more comfortable, on-board wi-fi. Oh, and did we mention cheaper?" "Why wait 'til the hotel to stretch out and relax? Introducing the GSP/Downtown Express Route featuring comfortable reclining seats, wi-fi and on-board television." "A job well done deserves a ride well equipped." The ads in the downtown hotels could include: "Entertainment doesn't have to wait for 'in-flight'." Finally, information and advertisement should be placed on the GSP website under Ground Transportation.

4.2.e Explore Furman campus shuttle

Furman University has initiated to Greenlink in the past and expressed interest in contracting with Greenlink to provide a campus

shuttle service. Furman has recently instituted a policy banning the use of personal automobiles by students on campus during certain hours of heightened academic and extra-curricular activity. However, in recent conversations with representatives from Furman, it has been communicated that this restriction does provide distinct challenges for student commuting on campus, particularly for those who need to access athletic facilities or other outlying campus facilities during tight academic and extra-curricular schedules. Therefore, a campus shuttle has been suggested as a possible solution to these challenges and Greenlink has been solicited as a possible operator of the service. While not likely to be a significant source of income for Greenlink, providing such a service could benefit Greenlink through both increased organizational exposure and through strengthened relationship with Furman, a valuable potential partner in future projects. Therefore, a partnership with Furman University to provide a campus shuttle should be explored and potentially pursued.

Task 1: Contact CARTA (Chattanooga) to discuss implementation of university specific route (i.e. MOCS Express)

Task 2: Contact Furman representative to identify core needs/desires for campus shuttle.

Task 3: Using the Total Cost Allocation Model, develop feasibility study for the campus shuttle.

Task 4: Deliver the feasibility study to Furman staff and initiate discussions regarding contract opportunities and challenges.

4.2.f Create student fare-free program

As noted above under Target Markets, university students represent an ideal target market for several reasons. First, they represent a demographic outside our predominant ridership and one which other target markets such as professionals might more readily identify creating the sense that public transportation might be a viable option for someone like themselves. College students also are more likely to be open to trying public transporta-

tion in part because some of them may lack viable alternative transportation options and many students are simply more open to trying new experiences. Finally, the costs of providing the fare for their use of the system could easily be absorbed by the university or college itself or passed back to the student in the form of a student fee creating easy access for the students with a student I.D. which would not require payment of fees to board Greenlink buses further incentivizing students to use the system. The following are steps to be taken to develop this fare-free program for students.

4.2.f.1 Conduct student surveys with local colleges and universities to determine and communicate need/desire for public transit

Student surveys will give helpful insight into the need and demand for public transportation options on and off campus at local universities and colleges. This information will not only be helpful for internal planning but, assuming that significant need and/or demand is demonstrated, can also serve as a powerful marketing tool to university administrators. A survey has already been prepared for students at North Greenville University. This survey can be easily modified to fit any campus.

Task 1: Determine target universities and colleges for surveys.

Task 2: Obtain permission and access to conduct surveys.

Task 3: Modify student survey to fit appropriate universities and colleges.

Task 4: Administer surveys.

Task 5: Collect and analyze results from surveys.

Task 6: Prepare reports summarizing survey results for use in marketing presentations.

4.2.f.2 Meet with appropriate local college and university officials to explain benefits of public transit and what GTA has to offer

In marketing to local universities and colleges, positive relationships with key representatives must continue to be cultivated. It is probably fair to say that public transit is not a priority or a felt pressing need to most institutions of higher education in Greenville County. Therefore, the benefits of public transportation must be identified, translated to demonstrate their relevance to student life and the educational pro-

4/15/12 Greenlink - North Greenville University Survey

[Exit this survey](#)

Greenlink - North Greenville University

Greenlink Transit, the public transportation provider for Greenville County, is considering a shuttle service in the Travelers Rest area, which would possibly include North Greenville University as the northernmost stop on the route. This route would potentially connect the campus of North Greenville to important destinations such as Wal-Mart and medical facilities in Travelers Rest, shopping in the Cherrydale area, and even downtown Greenville. Your feedback through the survey below will greatly assist us in assessing the viability of such a service and whether it would be useful to the NGU community. Thank you for your input!

1. Which class are you?

☐ Freshman
☐ Sophomore
☐ Junior
☐ Senior
☐ Graduate Student
☐ Staff/Faculty

2. Where do you reside during the academic year?

☐ On campus
☐ Off campus, with parents
☐ Off campus, other

3. Do you have a car available to you on campus?

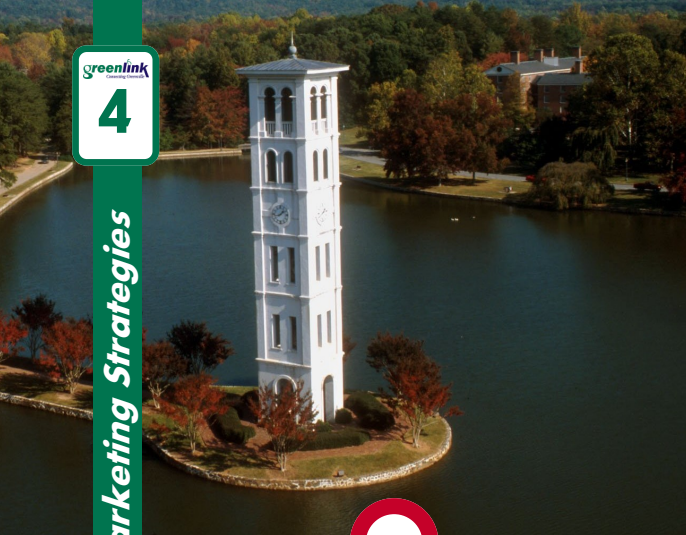
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Sometimes

4. How frequently do you leave campus?

☐ One or more times a day
☐ A few times a week
☐ Once a week

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/4WQXQZCH>

Figure 8:
Sample
from North
Greenville
Student
Survey



cess, and communicated to these institutions.

Task 1: Prepare marketing materials designed to communicate benefits of public transportation to universities and colleges. The materials should include results from the student surveys demonstrating the need and demand for transit options by students. These materials should include as well data supporting the benefit of public transportation to the entire community. The benefit to the community should be related to the university/college, demonstrating how a benefit to the community is a benefit to the university/college. The materials should encourage the university/college to view itself as an integral part of the community, both in contributing to and benefiting with the community. In addition, a specific long-term vision should be articulated of what Greenville County could be in the future with investment into public transportation. This future should be translated to demonstrate the benefits to local campuses.

Task 2: Plan and implement University Summit. The University Summit will be an opportunity to present the materials prepared in Task 1 as well as gather valuable feedback from university representatives on the transportation needs and desires of their campuses.

The University Summit will provide an opportunity to map out a mutually beneficial plan for the future integration of public transportation and higher education. Key representatives should be invited from Furman University, Greenville Technical College, Bob Jones University, North Greenville University, and Clemson University. Ideally, the Summit will be a launching pad into continued conversations with individual representatives and their respective institutions.

4.2.f.3 Implement program to allow fare free access to fixed route system for students with student I.D.

A service will be implemented which will allow students from those institutions that contract with Greenlink to ride the fixed route system fare free with a valid student I.D. This program will require a contract to be in place through which the institutions themselves pay a flat rate fee to allow their students to ride fare free. This fee could be passed on to students in the form of a transportation fee or other kind of fee or even simply taken from the general budget.

4.2.f.4 Develop marketing campaign targeting college students

Once the institutions themselves have agreed to partner in providing transit services to their students, tailored marketing plans must be developed to attract students to use the system. A “one size fits all” approach is unlikely to be effective due to the significant



differences between the student populations at the various institutions (i.e. the students at Furman University are likely to have different motivations for using public transportation than those at Bob Jones University). However, a base marketing plan could be developed and then tailored to address the specific demographics at the various campuses. Involving student business and marketing majors to help develop the marketing campaign would be a unique way of both better ensuring that the marketing plan addresses the needs and desires of the students as well as being a form of marketing in itself. Those students who work on the marketing plan would be much more likely to actually personally market the transportation system themselves. Social media should also most certainly be employed in reaching the student population. Again, perhaps core student focus groups who have interests in communal needs addressed by public transportation could be effectively mobilized to help extend the message about and opportunity to utilize public transit to other students. If students cannot be used in the preparation and implementation of the student-targeted marketing campaign then a plan should either be developed in house or outsourced. Given the relative complexity of developing a core plan with the flexibility necessary to apply to specific campuses, outsourcing the development of the plan might be necessary. Marketing options include, among others, placing an ad in the student newspaper, setting up a display with brochures in the student center, and a campus-wide e-mail blast.

4.3 Improve Ridership Experience/Promotions

4.3.a Develop “I am Greenlink” program to encourage division-wide awareness that all employees are brand ambassadors

A key component to improving ridership experience is customer service. As much as in any industry, in public transportation those who directly interface with customers, such as drivers and operational staff, are critical in defining the customer experience. Demeanor, attitudes, dress, posture, communication skills among these personnel which reflect the values and professional atmosphere to which Greenlink is committed are vital to overall organizational success. However, without an appropriate awareness of the crucial role that they play in the organization’s success or an appropriate sense of ownership and influence within the organization, many employees cease to feel that their performance is critical to organizational success and/or care about whether it is successful at all. While, surveys demonstrate that, overall, “frontline” employee performance has, in recent history, been of consistently high quality and that current riders are generally pleased with the service they receive, Greenlink must not make the mistake of failing to appropriately invest in maintaining and even improving in such a critical performance area. The “I Am Greenlink” program will encourage employees at all levels, including drivers, operational staff, maintenance workers and administrative staff to recognize their crucial role in the success of the organization. In order to keep expenses minimal, the program will, in its initial phase, focus on two areas.

Task 1: Develop appropriate opportunities to influence and provide helpful feedback at all levels of the organization. This could be in the form of regular employee roundtables or electronic media response channels such as e-mail, chat boards, or regular surveys. It could also be conducted through print media such as comment cards. Other avenues should also be explored.

Task 2: Create a recognition and reward system similar to an

employee of the month/quarter which will honor an employee for outstanding performance with both organizational recognition and some form of bonus or tangible award.

4.3.b Develop appropriate continual feedback channels for customers

The surveys noted in the first section of this plan contain very helpful information regarding the performance and perception of the entire Greenlink system. As our service grows, it will be imperative to continue to closely monitor our effectiveness as an organization in delivering an accessible, efficient, reliable and enjoyable experience to our riders. In addition, since Greenlink is a public service which benefits the entire community, including those who never ride a bus, and since public support of the Greenlink system will be necessary for approval of the tax referendum necessary to secure a dedicated funding source, broader public opinion regarding the system is desirable. Even for those who do not provide feedback, appropriate feedback channels will provide the sense that someone has an opportunity to influence the system if they desire. It also demonstrates that Greenlink cares about our riders and the public in general and desires to continually improve our system in order to address the needs and concerns of riders and the public. This is a critical message which needs to be sent to the public. To this end, development of accessible, continual feedback channels for riders and the general public is important. The following are all inexpensive marketing efforts. The only real cost is to staff time and the cost of printing the on-board comment cards.

Task 1: Develop slogan and logo with which to brand the feedback solicitation, i.e. "Greenlink Cares".

Task 2: Develop on-board comment cards. Develop and produce on board comment cards and install in buses with drop boxes to provide opportunities for current riders to provide regular feedback, sharing concerns and commendations as well as suggestions for needed improvements. The cards should be promoted by the driver after the initial installment and the boxes checked regularly (a schedule should be developed) with

any completed cards being delivered to Administrative staff for processing. The information gathered from the cards should then be assimilated into a regular report which will be used in both administrative and operational planning.

Task 3: Develop E-Newsletter feedback channel. The quarterly e-newsletter should add a permanent section which provides an opportunity to submit feedback, both positive and negative, regarding the Greenlink system to the newsletter administrator. This section should provide a direct link for submission (could be done by simply opening up an e-mail box) rather than providing contact information. The additional step would further discourage people from making use of the feedback channel.

Task 4: Website comment board/feedback channel. Similar to the e-newsletter, a section should be added to the Greenlink website with a direct link for providing feedback.

Task 5: Develop Social Networking Initiative. Create Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn pages for Greenlink.

4.3.c Introduce integration of CAD-AVL and website

Greenlink is scheduled to complete installation of a CAD-AVL system by the end of summer 2014. This system will integrate with the Greenlink website and should be accessible via smartphone. This system will not only be a significant improvement internally for operational staff, but also holds promise as a marketing tool. The CAD-AVL system will provide live, real-time updates on bus locations, enabling riders to know whether a bus has yet to arrive at a particular stop or has just recently left. This will greatly improve the rider experience as they will be able to know whether or not they have just missed a bus or exactly how long they should expect to wait for a bus to arrive. This kind of information should readily appeal to business professionals who are "choice" riders by increasing their confidence in the system and their ability to accurately determine the length of their trip, including wait times. As has been noted elsewhere, the mere presence of this system also sends the message that Greenlink is improving its system and technologies and is purposefully creating a public transportation system which is not bare

bones or minimalistic but is designed with the “choice” rider in mind, designed to present an attractive and competitive alternative for those who have other options when it comes to providing for their transportation.

In order for such significant improvements to actually attract new riders, however, they must be effectively marketed to the intended communities. In other words, because the improvements must be known in order to attract new riders they must be communicated to potential riders. It will not be effective to simply publish information regarding the CAD-AVL system on the website or post it inside buses. This type of communication, while important will only reach existing riders. The message about such a significant technological improvement must be communicated broadly to those who are not currently riders.

Task 1: Develop marketing/promotion plan for CAD-AVL. This could be done through a variety of mediums including, but not limited to, e-mail blasts (including e-newsletters), billboard ads, ads placed in periodicals and newspapers, informational meetings and news reports.

Task 2: Implement marketing plan for CAD-AVL.

Task 3: Implement smartphone app. Consider Smart Ride by Codemass, Inc.

4.3.d Introduce Downtown Greenville Lunch Trolley Service

The downtown Greenville lunch trolley will serve as both an important general service enhancement and a critical step in the phased marketing effort to reach business professionals as a target group. As a general service enhancement the downtown lunch trolley will bring a valuable and unique service to the downtown area – a means of quickly commuting up and down the main downtown corridor (mostly along main street) without having to search for parking or walk in unpleasant weather conditions. Currently the only options available for those who live or work in downtown and want to commute to another location in downtown during the lunch hour is to either walk or drive a personal automobile. Walking can be prohibited by either distance and/or weather conditions. As a result, numerous personal automobiles are often trying to navigate the downtown corridor during the

lunch hour leading to significant congestion and little on street parking availability. Thus, a lunch trolley would serve to more efficiently move people through the corridor as well as help to reduce congestions during the weekday lunch hours.

As a component in a phased marketing approach to acquire riders from the business professional community, the lunch trolley provides a service which actually has a high potential of being adopted and used by business professionals as a first step towards using the broader fixed route system. This first step is significantly more feasible from a cost perspective than the kind of wholesale system improvements necessary to get business professionals to become riders of the fixed route system. Those kind of changes would almost certainly require a dedicated funding source. The key, of course, to the success of the lunch trolley as a middle step for prospective professional riders towards use of the broader fixed route system is an exceptional service experience on the lunch trolley and subsequent fixed route enhancements which make that system a feasible option for these potential riders. The following tasks demonstrate this phased process.

Task 1: Initiate Lunchtime Downtown Trolley Service. Service anticipated to begin on October 1, 2013. A fare free lunch service should be provided between the hours of 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM with a maximum headway of 15 minutes.

Task 2: Market Lunchtime Downtown Trolley Service. This service should be branded as Greenlink’s “Lunch Express” or “LunchLine”. If possible, signage should indicate when the “Lunch Express” is in service. Service specific route maps/schedules as well as promotional cards or brochures should be developed. The service should be branded with a logo to affix to marketing materials, including route map/schedule and promotional cards. Maps and promotional cards should be distributed throughout downtown businesses, restaurants, residences and hotels in an initial marketing blitz. Certain restaurants, businesses and all hotels should maintain permanent displays. Additionally, ads should be displayed on several billboards near downtown promoting the service. The service

should also be promoted through e-mail blasts using Economic Development's existing network and through Greenlink's E-Newsletter. As a potential revenue source, ads from downtown restaurants could be placed in the brochures and maps/schedules.

Task 3: Determine critical fixed route system improvements. After the Lunch Express service is initiated, a thorough evaluation of the fixed route system specifically targeted to the business professional community should be conducted. This evaluation will assist Greenlink staff in determining the system enhancements most important to the business community. The evaluation should be conducted with on-board surveys on the downtown lunch trolley service. The downtown lunch service will help to isolate that community in order to make the sample of responses relevant and helpful. The survey should be targeted to better understand what system enhancements would be necessary to attract business professionals to begin to use the fixed route service. This survey could be prepared and conducted entirely using in house resources to minimize expense.

4.3.e Develop initial phase of Bus Rapid Transit System

Across the globe, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems have been used to significantly improve the transit experience at a fraction of the cost of other major system upgrades such as light rail or subway. BRT systems typically feature several key characteristics including enhanced facilities (stations, bus stops, etc.), dedicated right-of-way for the buses, and faster boarding (though low-floor buses, off-board ticketing, multiple door boarding, etc.). A BRT system would represent a major upgrade in transit services for Greenville County and the surrounding areas. Such a service enhancement has already been discussed and several funding attempts have been made. Greenlink was awarded a *Connections for Sustainability* grant which provided the funding for some of the planning required for the project. Most recently, New Starts has been identified as the federal funding source to supply the majority of the capital expense. However, it is unlikely that any long term funding solutions for operating expenses will be devel-

oped outside of an approved, sustainable dedicated funding source. Still, the potential to develop a BRT system would be one of the key benefits of a dedicated funding source and should be pursued as both a reason for and result of the approval of such funding.

Phase 1:

Task 1: Complete BRT conceptual design. Part of completing the conceptual design will involve conducting a market analysis to determine financial viability of the conceptual design. Also, transit-oriented developments connected to the BRT system will be determined along with relevant land development requirements/issues.

Task 2: Develop stakeholders for a BRT system.

Task 3: Develop Memorandum of Understanding and a formal agreement related to BRT development.

Task 4: Submit Letter of Intent to apply for New Starts grant to FTA.

Phase 2:

Task 1: Complete engineering design, preliminary cost estimate and NEPA.

Task 2: Receive/Demonstrate DNR finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and refine financial plan.

Phase 3:

Task 1: Commit non-federal funding and finalize construction plans. ROW acquisition. Develop before and after data collection plan. Initiate FTA Evaluation.

Task 2: Submit grant in TEAM.

Phase 4: Initiate Construction

4.4 Expand Service Area

4.4.a Introduce Mauldin/Simpsonville Route

With planning well underway, the Mauldin/Simpsonville Route should be implemented not too long after the adoption of this document. Funding has already been approved and plans for the route are being finalized through a series of public meetings. The route will connect Mauldin and Simpsonville not only to Greenville but also to each other, which input provided at the public meetings has suggested to be equally important. To maximize the use and benefit of the new route, a public promotion plan should be implemented.

Task 1: Develop Mauldin/Simpsonville Route Promotion Plan. This could include placing billboard ads one month prior to the beginning of the service or placing an ad in the local newspapers. The ads could read, "Greenlink. Coming soon to a street near you." Subsequently, ads should be placed for one month after the beginning of service on either billboards or in local newspapers. The ads could read, "Greenlink is here. Get on board." or "We're here. Come ride with us." or "Hello Mauldin (Simpsonville), your ride is here." On both ads information should be included on how to learn more about the route. If the ads are placed in local newspapers they should include the website address and the website needs to be updated to include a clear link or section devoted to details about the Route.

4.4.b Continue to pursue Travelers Rest Shuttle Service

The Travelers Rest Shuttle Service has been pursued as a potential public/private partnership project in order to fill a transportation gap created by the termination of a similar shuttle service provided by Upstate Shuttle Service, an independent contractor. This project would allow Greenlink to be better positioned to reach several target markets in addition to the traditional transit dependent demographic such as students. Potential funding support for this project could be available through the JARC grant. Potential partners already identified are Wal-Mart in Travelers Rest, City of Travelers Rest, and Furman University. Varying levels of interest have been expressed



Walmart



FURMAN

from these potential partners with the primary factor influencing interest appearing to be cost. The Woodlands at Furman and North Greenville University were also pursued but with little favorable response. Other potential partners yet to be contacted include North Greenville Hospital, part of the Greenville Hospital System, and the Travelers Rest Business Association. This project has potential to increase the Greenlink footprint while being funded from private and other public sources, even creating a small revenue stream with Greenlink as the operator. It also holds value as it expands the Greenlink brand exposure to another community and, assuming positive experiences, increases the potential of passing a tax referendum for a dedicated funding source. Relationships between the existing potential partners need to continue to be developed. In addition, the potential partners mentioned which have not yet been contacted need to be pursued.

Task 1: Continue to contact potential partners, communicating potential, identifying challenges and pushing for commitment.

Task 2: Have necessary partners on board in time to submit a JARC application during the next funding cycle (by January 2013).

Task 3: Submit JARC application in January 2013.

Task 4: Implement service in July 2013.

4.4.c Explore Clemson commuter route (between Clemson and CU-ICAR)

Similar to Furman, Clemson University has initiated conversations with Greenlink expressing interest in contracting to provide a commuter shuttle for students between the main Clemson campus and CU-ICAR. Also similar to the potential represented by the Furman Campus Shuttle, the Clemson Connector Shuttle partnership represents an excellent opportunity for Greenlink to both expand its service footprint and brand recognition and improve relations with a valuable partner organization (a strong, positive relationship has already been established with Clemson as a result of the St. Francis/CU-ICAR Shuttle partnership). Strong partnerships with significant regional institutions such as Clemson and Furman will greatly enhance the potential of receiving the necessary community support to pass a referendum for a dedicated funding source. This partnership opportunity should be pursued.

Task 1: Reach out to Clemson University contact person.

Task 2: Discuss various service levels, route options and desires with Clemson University representatives.

Task 3: Develop feasibility study for proposed route and service options.

Task 4: Finalize plans and conclude contract negotiations

Task 5: Implement commuter route service

Task 6: Prepare brochure including route and service information.

Task 7: Advertise service through campus-wide e-mail blast, inclusion in the campus newspaper and student and faculty post boards.

4.4.d Introduce Fountain Inn Connector Shuttle

The Fountain Inn Connector Shuttle would function virtually the same as the Travelers Rest Shuttle. Like the Travelers Rest Shuttle, this project could be pursued as a JARC project, significantly limiting the local funding burden. The shuttle itself would most likely run in a circular route connecting the Fountain Inn community as the southeastern-most point on the quickly growing I-385 Corridor identified above (Mauldin, Simpsonville, Fountain Inn) to the new Mauldin/Simpsonville Route. By adding the Travelers Rest Shuttle and connecting the Fountain Inn community to the Mauldin/Simpsonville Route, Greenlink will create uninterrupted northwest to southeast county-wide transportation service from Travelers Rest to Fountain Inn. Once a dedicated funding source is approved, the frequency of the connecting routes as well as the timing of the connections will be significantly improved further increasing the efficiency of such a trip.

Task 1: Make contact with potential partners (including Fountain Inn Mayor and City Council), communicating potential, identifying challenges and pushing for commitment.

Task 2: Have necessary partners on board in time to submit a JARC application during the next funding cycle (by January 2014).

Task 3: Submit JARC application in January 2014.

Task 4: Implement service in July 2014.

4.4.e Introduce Greer Connector Shuttle

The Greer Connector Route would function virtually the same as the Travelers Rest and Fountain Inn Connectors. Like the Travelers Rest Shuttle, this route should be pursued as a JARC project. This connector shuttle would open up access to the Greenlink system to the residents of Greer. The connector shuttle would be a circular route which would connect to the end of Route 11. As with the Mauldin/Simpsonville, Fountain Inn and Travelers Rest expansions, extending the Greenlink footprint to incorporate Greer would not only open up access to other county destinations to Greer residents but

would allow residents in other municipalities or areas to access Greer via Greenlink. These service expansions will greatly enhance the connection across the county of various municipalities and reduce traffic congestion and other problems related to the high level of personal automobile use currently relied upon to commute back and forth between these areas. Several significant employers are based in Greer which would be accessible through the Greer Connector Shuttle.

Task 1: Make contact with potential partners (including Greer Mayor and City Council), communicating potential, identifying challenges and pushing for commitment.

Task 2: Have necessary partners on board in time to submit a JARC application during the next funding cycle (by January 2014).

Task 3: Submit JARC application in January 2014.

Task 4: Implement service in July 2014.

4.5 Obtain Support for a Tax Referendum

4.5.a Pursue development of interest group/alliance to advocate for public funding

Currently, public awareness of both the presence and potential of Greenlink along with a willingness to invest in public transportation is too low for a successful campaign to achieve a dedicated funding source. An interest group or public alliance will be critical in the cause of developing the kind of public support necessary to pass a referendum establishing a dedicated funding source. An alliance would bring together parties which recognize the value of public transportation and the contribution which a more robust system could make to our community's future development. Together these parties would significantly increase the exposure of any educational and/or advocacy efforts as well as fundraising potential necessary to fund a public education campaign. This approach has been successful in other locations.

Task 1: Contact Citizens for Modern Transit in St. Louis (the organization behind the development of the Greater St. Louis Transit Alliance

resulting in the passing of Proposition A for a ½ penny sales tax to create a dedicated funding source for MetroBus, MetroLink and Call-a-Ride services. Determine strengths and weaknesses of their approach and how these should impact any plan to pursue a dedicated funding source in Greenville County.

Task 2: Establish the Upstate Transit Coalition. This will require officially registering as a non-profit organization. This is required for establishing an independent organizational identity, separate accounts, processing funds, tax benefits for donors, etc.

Task 3: Develop branding for the Upstate Transit Coalition. The Coalition will require a unique identity to use in marketing to potential members as well as for use in an eventual public education campaign. The branding should include a color scheme, logo, letterhead, and tagline.

Task 4: Create a website for the Upstate Transit Coalition. This will most likely have to be outsourced due to City restrictions on website development. The website will need to have options for both membership sign up and secure donation transactions. It should also have appropriate channels for providing feedback both on the needs and desires for public transit in Greenville County and on the process of securing a dedicated funding source.

Task 5: Contact local public and private entities (business, education, non-profit, and government heads) and invite key representatives to serve in the Coalition.

Task 6: Outreach to other local organizations which might be helpful in accessing key persons and leveraging influence in the political process (i.e. The Upstate Alliance).

4.5.b Pursue inclusion on the ballot by County Council

Once the Upstate Transit Coalition has been established and

interested parties have been identified, the momentum for developing a dedicated funding source to enhance public transit services in Greenville County should be communicated to Greenville County Council. Rather than immediately presenting a request for inclusion of a tax referendum on the next ballot, representatives from Greenlink should engage with individual Council members as well as the Council as a whole to articulate the potential and need for regional expansion of the services currently and potentially provided by Greenlink. County Council should feel that they are a part of the process in determining how to pursue making that vision a reality. The objective of a tax referendum should be something that County Council and Greenlink staff/Upstate Transit Coalition arrive at together.

Task 1: Prepare 15 minute presentation to demonstrate to County Council the need for and potential benefits from a robust, regional public transportation system and Greenlink's readiness to supply that system.

Task 2: Meet with Butch Kirven and give presentation. Encourage Mr. Kirven to convene an ad hoc committee to explore the possibilities of an enhanced public transportation system further.

Task 3: Work with the ad hoc committee to help map out what the future of Greenville County would look like both with and without enhanced public transportation and to make the case that Greenville County needs increased investment in public transportation now in order for the community to reach its fullest potential over the next 10-20 years. Suggestions should be made to Council regarding how to pursue obtaining the dedicated funding source which would be necessary to fund such an expanded transportation system. It should be made clear that such a system would not be possible given Greenlink's current funding situation.

Task 4: Work with the ad hoc committee towards making a recommendation to County Council to place a tax referendum on the ballot. (This should occur in 2016).

4.5.c Develop and implement public education campaign

Once County Council has agreed to place a tax referendum on a ballot for public vote, a public education campaign should be initiated to educate the County citizens about the benefits of a strong public transportation system. This campaign should emphasize the fact that these benefits extend even to those who choose not to personally use the system. The Greater St. Louis Transit Alliance has captured this dynamic well with their tagline, "Some of us ride it. All of us need it." This is the message that Greenlink and the Upstate Transit Coalition need to internalize, personalize and communicate to Greenville County. This campaign will need to be funded from sources outside Greenlink's budget. Therefore fundraising will need to occur. This will be part of the task of the Upstate Transit Coalition.

Task 1: Allow members of the Upstate Transit Alliance to work with the general public to raise awareness of the need for a tax referendum (or other designated funding source).

Task 2: Encourage members of the Upstate Transit Alliance to raise financial support for the public information campaign that will allow the public to make an informed decision regarding the type of transit system they are willing (or unwilling) to pay for.

Task 3: Design public education campaign. This will likely include both mail-out pieces with information demonstrating the benefits of investing in public transportation as well as community "town hall" meetings to give presentation advocating for investment in public transportation and to answer questions regarding the potential tax referendum. Radio and television service announcements should also be considered at this point.

Task 4: Implement public education campaign.

5.1 Conclusion

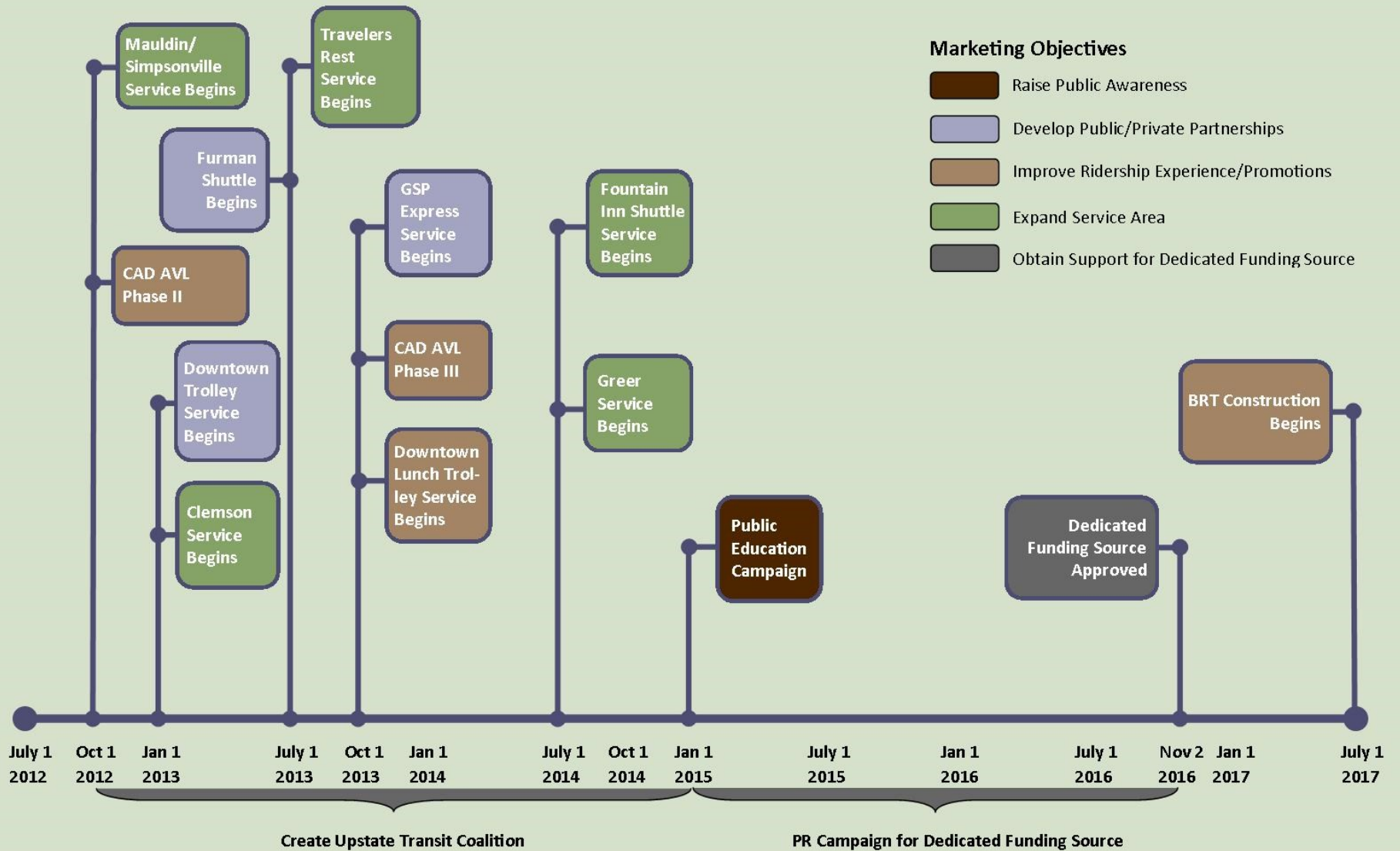
The current level of service offered by the Greenlink system is not enough to promote financial sustainability or adequately address the increased demands placed on public transportation throughout Greenville County. The service does little more than accommodate the demands of those who are transit-dependent and have limited mobility options. Apart from major system restructuring, unforeseeable with incremental improvements and partnerships, residents of Greenville County will never be compelled to vote in favor of locally mandated funding.

The improvements and incremental growth delineated in the current document offer a five year, sixty—month plan with the end result being dedicated funding. This funding is essential in order to sustain the operation as needed and grow the system to the level required. Though there are many paths that could theoretically lead to the same end, it is the sincere belief of Greenlink staff that the implementation of this plan is the most effective way to offer the citizens of Greenville County the opportunity to determine the level of public transportation available. However, it is imperative that the citizenry make well-informed decisions and see not only what public transportation in Greenville County is, but also what it might become. Each locally engendered partnership, service expansion and system enhancement serves one core purpose: enabling Greenlink/GTA to become the vibrant system many have envisioned it to be while obtaining enough local support for dedicated funding. This plan will be successful only if it accomplishes this goal in the time-period allotted.

In order to facilitate the measurement of this plan, the Milestone Monitoring chart provided in Appendix 2 should be integrated into the relevant Board Committee's monthly reports. This will create the necessary accountability among staff and leadership to ensure that the pursuit of enhanced service through locally dedicated funding enabling GTA to become self-sustaining is prioritized to the degree required.

Appendix 1

Greenlink Marketing Milestones Timeline



Appendix 2

Marketing Milestone Performance Indicator

Project Milestone	Milestone Completion Date	Date Milestone Achieved
Implementation of M/S Route	10/01/2012	
Implementation of CAD/AVL Phase II	10/01/2012	
Implementation of Downtown Trolley	01/01/2013	
Create Upstate Transit Coalition	10/01/2012	
Clemson Express Bus Service Begins	01/01/2013	
Traveler's Rest Shuttle Service Begins	07/01/2013	
Furman Shuttle Begins	07/01/2013	
GSP Express Service Begins	10/01/2013	
Implementation of CAD/AVL Phase III	10/01/2013	
Downtown Lunch Trolley Service Begins	01/01/2013	
Fountain Inn Shuttle Service Begins	07/01/2014	
Greer Connector Service Begins	07/01/2014	
Implementation of PR Campaign for County-wide Dedicated Funding	01/01/2015	
Dedicated Funding Source Approved	11/02/2016	
BRT Construction Begins	07/01/2017	

Appendix 3

APTA Quick Facts Supporting Investing in Public Transportation

Economy

Public transportation creates jobs

- Every \$1 billion invested in public transportation capital and operations creates and supports an average of 36,000 jobs.
- These 36,000 jobs result in roughly \$3.6 billion in business sales and generate nearly \$500 million in federal, state, and local tax revenues.
- Federal investment provides more than \$10 billion annually for public transportation. This investment creates jobs and helps transit systems meet the demand for public transit services.
- Consistent long-term federal funding sources are essential to plan and finance major public transportation capital projects that have tremendous economic impact on the local economy.
- 74 percent of public funding for transit is spent creating and supporting hundreds of thousands of private sector jobs.

Public transportation benefits families and businesses

- For every \$1 invested in public transportation, \$4 is generated in economic returns.
- Every \$10 million in capital investment in public transportation can return up to \$30 million in business sales alone.
- An individual can achieve an average annual savings of more than \$9,900 by taking public transportation instead of driving and by living with one less car.
- Public transportation is a \$55 billion industry that employs more than 400,000 people.

Public transportation gets individuals where they need to go

- The American public supports increased funding for public transportation. Even as the economy slowed, 79 percent of all transit-related ballot initiatives passed throughout the country in 2011.

Energy

Public transportation reduces our dependence on oil

- Public transportation saves the U.S. the equivalent of 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline annually.
- In 2011, Americans took 10.4 billion trips on public transportation.
- Public transportation use saves the equivalent of 900,000 automobile fill-ups every day.
- According to the most recent Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) report on congestion, individuals who live in areas served by public transportation save more than 300 million gallons of fuel annually.

Public transportation gives individuals affordable, energy-efficient alternative transportation choices

- An individual can achieve an average annual savings of more than \$9,900 by taking public transportation instead of driving and by living with one less car.
- Household residents living within the proximity of public transportation drive an average of 4,400 fewer miles annually compared to those with no access to public transportation.
- The average household in which at least one member uses public transportation on a given day drives 16 fewer miles per day compared to a household that does not use public transportation.
- Expanded public transit strategies coordinated with combining travel activity, land use development, and operational efficiencies are estimated to save as much as \$112 billion as compared to annual savings in vehicle costs to consumers.

Appendix 3 (Cont'd)

APTA Quick Facts Supporting Investing in Public Transportation

Environment

Public transportation is the responsible environmental choice.

- U.S. greenhouse gases from transportation represent 28 percent of total U.S. emissions.
- Public transportation saves 37 million metric tons of carbon dioxide annually – equivalent to the emissions resulting from the electricity generated for the use of 4.9 million households or every household in Washington, DC; New York City; Atlanta; Denver; and Los Angeles combined.
- If an individual switches a 20-mile roundtrip commute to public transportation, his or her annual CO₂ emissions will decrease by 4,800 pounds per year, equal to a 10 percent reduction in a two-car household's carbon footprint.
- Public transportation offers an immediate alternative for individuals seeking to reduce their energy use and carbon footprints. Taking public transportation far exceeds the combined benefits of using energy-efficient light bulbs, adjusting thermostats, weatherizing one's home, and replacing a refrigerator.
- Expanded public transit strategies coordinated with combining travel activity, land use development, and operational efficiencies can reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) by 24 percent. The annual savings in vehicle costs to consumers will exceed the cost of enacting these strategies by as much as \$112 billion.

Public transportation agencies are reducing their carbon footprint

- Public transportation systems are investing in environmentally friendly vehicles such as diesel-electric hybrids, which are up to 40 percent more fuel efficient than conventional diesel buses.
- Transit systems have also made innovative investments to install solar technology and construct facilities that meet new energy-efficient standards including the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environment and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

Quality of Life

Public transportation reduces traffic congestion, travel time, and stress.

Those who ride public transportation lessen the congestion on our roadways.

- Americans living in areas served by public transportation save 796 million hours in travel time and 303 million gallons of fuel annually, according to the most recent Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) report on congestion.
- Nationwide, costs from traffic congestion would have risen \$17 billion without public transportation services.

Public transportation expands opportunities and transportation choices

The accessibility and opportunities created by public transportation provide important choices and options for people from all walks of life.

- Public transportation provides access to job opportunities for millions of Americans as well as a transportation option to get to work, go to school, visit friends, or go to a doctor's office.
- 83 percent of older Americans say that public transit provides easy access to the things they need in everyday life.
- Public transportation is a vital link for the more than 51 million Americans with disabilities.

Public transportation users are more likely to meet recommended exercise goals

When Americans use public transportation, they walk more. Walking increases fitness levels, leading to healthier citizens and less strain on the health care system.

- People in households with access to transit drive an average of 4,400 fewer miles annually, compared to those in similar households with no access to public transportation.